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AGAWAM

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TENNESSEE GAS

Council: We can't deny a federal pipeline

By Michael Ballway
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Faced with a room full of people asking that Agawam take a stand against fossil fuels, city councilors on Monday thanked them for their efforts but didn't deliver the requested vote.

"Our hands are tied," said Councilor George Bitzas.

"We're between a rock and a hard place," said Councilor Paul Cavallo.

"Believe me, it's a very, very difficult decision," said Councilor Anthony Suffriti.

The council voted 9-1 to accept \$150,000 from Tennessee Gas Pipeline Company LLC in exchange for an expanded easement across three town-owned properties, part of a 2.1-mile pipeline to be built from the Suffield Street compressor station to Silver Lake. The new pipeline is intended to boost natural gas delivery service to cities and towns north of Agawam. Opponents say it's not needed, and will bring with it significant threats to the

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ST. PATRICK'S DAY



Emma Thomson, newly crowned as Agawam's 2020 St. Patrick's Day colleen, leads her court in a walk around Oak Ridge Country Club at the coronation ceremony on Feb. 8.

PHOTO BY MICHAEL BALLWAY

Colleen fulfills a childhood dream

By Michael Ballway
mballway@turley.com

A dream came true last weekend for a little girl from a big Irish family.

From the time she was 10 years old, Emma Thomson knew she wanted to be Agawam's colleen. Her family's Irish roots run deep, and representing her town

at the largest celebration of Irish heritage in the region would be a perfect match.

"Every year since we were little, my cousins and I all went to the parade," said Thomson. "When we were little, we had matching Irish sweaters."

Now her cousins — who number around 30 — will get to watch her in the seat of honor on Aga-

wam's float as it travels down the streets of Holyoke on March 22. Thomson was selected from a group of six finalists at the annual coronation ceremony on Feb. 8 to be the 20th young lady to serve as the town's colleen.

It won't be her first time in the spotlight. Thomson is well-known to local fans of field hockey, serving as captain of the Brownies

varsity team and having played on the silver medal-winning team at the Bay State Summer Games. She has also worked as a youth lacrosse coach for junior high and middle school children. She has been a volunteer at local races and has participated in Wreaths Across America, and works part-

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VALENTINE'S DAY

'Never go to bed mad': Longtime couples offer love advice

By Shelby Macri
smacri@turley.com

Friday is Valentine's Day, a day to celebrate love and those who have shared it. Two Agawam couples whose love has stood the test of time are Cliff and Carol Brown, and Roy and Chi-Man Wong. We caught up with them at the Agawam Senior Center this week to ask how they've made love last for decades, and if they have any advice for the rest of us.

Cliff and Carol Brown

How long have you been together?

Cliff: We've been married 53 years. She was 18 years old and I was 19 years old when we got married. Fifty-three years we've been together, and we never separated at all, even while I was in the Army.

Carol: Yeah, we've been together for a while, and what can I say, I like him a lot. He's doing something right.

How did you meet?

Carol: We were high school sweethearts. We meet in school and he was a year ahead of me. I was 15 years old and he was 16 years old when we met, we've been together ever since. We met in Portland, Maine, and found our way here to Agawam, to settle down with our family.

What's the secret to staying together for so long?

Cliff: We love each other! You know, that's a big part of it. We

talk a lot, too, that's how we work through things. And never let any argument get big, find a way to work it out before it gets to that point.

Carol: We do love each other, and we can have our arguments, but we always seem to find a way to work our way out of them. We always kiss each other at night, even if it's a quick smooch before falling asleep.

What's something romantic you do for each other?

Cliff: Go on vacation! We spend a lot of time with our granddaughter; she lives close to us, so we see her often. Traveling is a way for us to get away and spend some more time together.

How do you settle arguments?

Carol: We do argue, well, I do the arguing and he's very passive. He listens to me very well, and that's really how it works. Really, we bicker a little bit, and we don't

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NOTICE

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Q & AGAWAM

Awardee loves volunteering for good causes

By Shelby Macri
smacri@turley.com

Kay Benson was honored this weekend as the 2020 Anne Sullivan Award winner, and be a highlighted member of the Agawam contingent in this year's St. Patrick's Day Parade in Holyoke. We had a chat with her to get to know her better.

Q: What is the Anne Sullivan Award?

A: It's an award that's always given to a St. Patrick's Committee member, and it's typically given to a member that has made notable contributions to the town and community. It's given to those who volunteer in the community and help out the town. There's also an Anne Sullivan memorial in Feeding Hills. I've always admired her. Anne Sullivan helped Helen Keller and worked with her, while being mostly blind herself. I think that's why this particular award is named after her — Anne Sullivan was very community-oriented.

Q: How did you receive the Anne Sullivan award?

A: This is my first time receiving an award like this, and it's quite humbling, honestly. I've contributed time and energy to many



Kay Benson, the 2020 Anne Sullivan Award recipient, is congratulated by Mayor William Sapelli during the Colleen Coronation ceremony on Feb. 8 at Oak Ridge Country Club in Feeding Hills. PHOTO BY MICHAEL BALLWAY

Kay Benson

Why you should know her: She's been in Agawam since 1967. She joined the St. Patrick's Committee in 2014 and has helped to build the floats ever since.

Favorite thing about Agawam: The friendliness. It's a small and safe community and a nice town to live in.

different areas of the community, I have and still work with several groups. I've volunteered for an organization called Rainbows for All God's Children, a support group for kids with passed parents, divorced, or struggling parents. There was also a similar group for adults. I mostly volunteer at the nursing home — Heritage Hall — and St. John's Church. I help wherever I

can and where I'm needed. I belong to St. John's, I'm a parishioner, so it's easy for me to help them out. I enjoy the work I do.

Q: What did you do for work?

A: I was actually the recreation director at the Heritage Hall nursing home for 35 years before retiring. Now I spend a lot of my time volunteering, and of course being with my family. I loved working with the elderly patients there. I had a lot of regulars but I enjoyed seeing new people. They have a lot of wisdom to give, if you're willing to listen. I actively volunteer there because I enjoy their company. I've been retired and my husband recently retired, so we're planning on traveling more.

Q: What is it like to be Irish in Agawam?

A: Well, it's great to be Irish anywhere, but I think it adds to the cultural diversity of Agawam. The town used to be primarily Italian on the north side, and while there are still a lot of Italians in town, there are also so many more heritages. While I grew up with my Irish heritage around me, I didn't really dive in deep until I visited Ireland. I was able to see me grandfather's house in Sheem on the Ring of Kerry — my cousin lives there now and I learned that the Irish usually pass residencies down within the family rather than selling them.

Q: How were your trips to Ireland?

A: It's amazing over there, lots of beautiful views. I've been to Ireland three times and I love it every time. I want to go back one day, hopefully soon, since we're both retired. The first time I went to Ireland I was an adult, but I learned so much while I was there. I had many relatives to teach me while I was there, and while there was always a part of the family that was very involved in Irish heritage, I learned much more on vacation. The people in Ireland are more trusting and generally more friendly, things are done differently and it was interesting to see.

Q: What are some of your hobbies?

A: I have been doing a lot of my hobbies in my free time. I really enjoy reading and doing some yardwork — anything to get outside, especially when it's nicer out. I like to host my friends and family, and just hang out and spend time with them for a bit. Travel is a big thing for me and my husband — that includes locally, out of state, and internationally. Hopefully we can visit Europe again. During my free time, I work on the parade float, and that's always a good time. I really enjoy it.

Q: Although the subject of the float is a surprise, what can you say about it?

A: Ever since I joined the St. Patrick's Committee, I've worked on the float, I've really enjoyed it. What I can say is that we're competing in the Irish category this year, we were in the religious category last year. Last year we created the Book of Kells, and we won first place in the religious category. Each team of float designers decide what flat they're going to make and which category they'll put it in. We've won first place four out of the five years that I've been involved in the committee, and it's always great fun. I love that it's a surprise, we always have an idea of what it should look like in our heads, but the final product is just as much a surprise to us as it is to everyone else.

Q: What's something surprising that happens behind the scenes on parade day?

A: Well, something al-

ways happens with the float. We're never expecting it, and even though we try to be ready for every scenario, it sneaks up on us. One year, the top of the float fell off because it was too tall for one section of the route, we got to work and put it back together. We still won first place that year. It's always a great time and we've learned to be on our toes. We try to expect the unexpected, and we're going to try to be just as ready this year.

Q: What's it like to be a part of the St. Patrick's Committee?

A: It's a great group of people to work with and coordinate with. I'm always learning from someone and I'm constantly learning about my heritage. I really enjoy the time that I spend at the committee, and I always enjoy walking in the parade. I recently became a board member as well as a committee member. The board meets every first Tuesday of the month and the committee meets the second Wednesday of the month. Everyone is welcome, of course! I'm looking forward to continuing to work with this committee and all these wonderful people.

Q: What's it like to be in the parade?

A: It's great. I've always marched in the parade, since I joined in 2014, so for the past five years I've marched. I really enjoy it and I'm excited to be the Anne Sullivan awardee in the parade, rather than an ordinary member. Although, this year, I think I'm going to ride in the car. A committee member drives the convertible and there are people that hold the banner and walk in front of the car to announce the Agawam float. I really enjoy that the colleens also don't know about the float, the don't see it until they step up onto it — it's a very exciting time. We usually do a celebratory cocktail hour after the parade, and people will have teas and get-togethers before the parade, as well. It's just a great experience.

Whom should we interview next? Who has an interesting job, hobby, or story to tell in Agawam and Feeding Hills? Suggest a "Q & Agawam" subject by emailing aan@turley.com.

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CLUES ACROSS

- Small deer
- Khoikhoi peoples
- South African statesman
- Keyboard key
- Remove
- A conspicuous constellation
- Data executive
- Retired NASCAR driver
- Tightens
- A picture of the Virgin Mary
- "The Mission" actor Jeremy
- Confidently
- More (Spanish)
- Sports highlight show (abbr.)
- Hand out cards
- Distinctive Asian antelope
- Arabic greeting
- Of I
- Hip hop trio

CLUES DOWN

- Meat roll
- One's mother (Brit.)
- GYN
- Belgian city
- Plucks
- Leak slowly
- Denotes a particular region
- General's assistant (abbr.)
- Divides
- Kid
- Inland Empire
- Expanded Learning Symposium
- Engaged in conflict
- Former CBS sportscaster
- Characterized by unity
- Working-class
- Corners
- ___ de plume
- Influential French artist
- "Very" in musical terms
- Financial account

CLUES DOWN

- Long, flat abdominal muscles
- Small Eurasian willow
- Justified in terms of profitability
- Required
- River that starts in Turkey
- Disfigure
- A way of communicating (abbr.)
- Leaks slowly
- Shady place under trees
- Made a speech
- Long, angry speech
- Mortar trough
- Autonomic nervous system
- Southern India island
- Grab quickly
- Ancient Mesopotamian city
- With three uneven sides
- Football visionary Hunt
- Primordial matters

- Facing towards the flow of a glacier
- "A Delicate Balance" writer
- Emits coherent radiation
- Commercial
- Groups of foot bones
- Out of print
- Partner to cheese
- German river
- Concluding speech
- Spanish dish
- Prominent California cape Point
- Any high mountain
- Ethiopian lake
- Mr.
- Excessive fluid accumulation in tissues
- Large, flightless bird
- Oil industry term (abbr.)
- Something one can draw
- Officers in charge
- Greek island

CROSSWORD SOLUTION ON PAGE 13

Dinner supports American Legion post

American Legion Wilson-Thompson Post 185, "The Tank," will host a fundraiser dinner 6-8 p.m. this Thursday, Feb. 13. The dinner will be catered by Pajer's. Tickets are \$15 and may be purchased at the door. Proceeds benefit the post. The American Legion is at 478 Springfield St., Feeding Hills.

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Vendors sought for Leap Day tag sale

Agawam Congregational Church will hold a huge, special, leap year tag sale from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. both Friday and Saturday, Feb. 28-29. This sale promises something for everyone. Interested vendors may request an application from the church office at 413-786-7111 or agawamcongregationalchurch.com, according to tag sale chairman and church member Dale Melanson. The church, at 745 Main St., Agawam, is handicapped accessible, with a large parking lot.

Six Flags New England hosts job fair at park this weekend

Six Flags New England, the region's largest theme park, is hiring over 3,000 seasonal employees for the 2020 season, which begins on Saturday, April 11.

The park, the largest seasonal employer in New England, will hold three job fairs on Presidents Day weekend, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. each day on Saturday, Sunday and Monday, Feb 15-17.

All hiring events will take place at the Human Resources building at 1756 Main St., Agawam. Six Flags New England will be hiring for all positions, including rides, admissions, food service, games, entertainment, lifeguards, loss prevention, cleanliness team, EMTs, security officers, entertainment, retail, and more.

Interested applicants must be at least

16 years old and should be prepared and dressed for on-the-spot interviews. Entertainment auditions will be available throughout the job fair as the park casts dancers, singers, performers and tech crew. Interviewees will be seen on a first-come basis, with limited positions in specialty areas.

For more information, contact the park's human resources department at 413-786-9300, ext. 3100, or visit www.six-flags.com.

Any candidate that is offered and accepts a position before noon each day of the job fair will receive one free admission ticket to Six Flags New England, valid for entry between April 11 and April 26.

Census form mailed to all households

Town Clerk Vincent Gioscia last week reported that census forms have been mailed to all residents of Agawam and Feeding Hills.

State law requires that the town take a census every year, and that all full-time residents respond with their name, date of birth and voter status. Failure to sign and return this form, whether or not there are any corrections, additions or deletions, will result in removal from the active voters list.

Filling out the form does not register a person to vote. Voter registration must be completed at a town clerk's office or the Registry of Motor Vehicles. For more information about voting or the street listing, contact the town clerk's office at 413-786-0400, ext. 8215.

The town census is separate from the 2020 federal census, which will be conducted later this year.



Pastor Ken Blanchard blesses a member of Agawam United Methodist Church in the church driveway on Ash Wednesday in 2015. FILE PHOTO

'Drive-thru' Ash Wednesday planned

Agawam United Methodist Church at 459 Mill St., Feeding Hills, will again offer a "drive-thru" Ash Wednesday blessing this year for all those who are either too busy to attend a full worship service somewhere or who have limited mobility or health issues.

Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of the Christian season of Lent, which concludes after 40 days with the celebration of Easter Sunday.

Pastor Ken Blanchard will offer ash-

es for people of any and all Christian denominations from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 26, at Agawam UMC in the circular driveway in front of the church.

In addition to anointing foreheads with ashes, the blessing will include a scripture reading and a brief prayer. This is being offered instead of a traditional Ash Wednesday worship service inside the building. For more information, visit www.agawam-worship.org.

Author to discuss 'ghost ship' wreck

Author Jill Farinelli will discuss "The Palatine Wreck: The Legend of the New England Ghost Ship" at 7 p.m. Monday, Feb. 24, at the Agawam Public Library.

The wreck of the British merchant ship Palatine occurred two days before Christmas in 1738, off the coast of Rhode Island. From this incident sprang one of New England's most chilling maritime mysteries. How did the rumors at the heart of the stories begin?

This is Farinelli's first work of historical non-fiction, on a subject that captured her imagination after spending a week with friends on Block Island 10 years ago.

Books will be available for purchase and signing.

For more information or to register for this free event, call 413-789-1550, ext. 4, or visit www.agawamlibrary.org. The library is at 750 Cooper St., Agawam.



Agawam's Mike DiMauro, right, visits the Washington office of U.S. Rep. Richard Neal, D-Springfield.

SUBMITTED PHOTO

Autism advocate visits with Neal

Mike DiMauro, an Agawam native and autism self-advocate, visited with U.S. Rep. Richard Neal in Washington, D.C., on Feb. 5.

DiMauro, 35, met with the Springfield congressman's staff to talk about autism and got a chance to meet the congressman himself.

"When I saw him, I was star struck and my mind drew a blank of who he was," DiMauro recalled. "Then I figured out who he was and glad that I had the chance to see him."

DiMauro currently lives in a community with other neighbors with autism and other disabilities at Quest Village in Orlando, Fla. He is an Autism Speaks Volunteer Advocacy Ambassador for Florida's 7th Congressional District, which is served by fellow Ways and Means Committee member Stephanie Murphy. DiMauro said that since there were no ambassadors serving his hometown district, he decided to be the ambassador for that district, as well.

"I am very thankful for the opportunity to represent Congressman Neal and Congresswoman Murphy as an Autism Speaks Volunteer Advocacy Ambassador, because they are both on the same House committee and are both my hometown and current members of Congress," DiMauro said. "I grew up as a constituent of Congressman Neal and now, I am thankful to be a constituent of Congresswoman Murphy."

DiMauro also volunteers at Nathaniel's Hope, which is an organization that helps kids with special needs and their families across Central Florida and around the world. DiMauro was in Washington, D.C., because every year he heads up to Agawam from Orlando to volunteer at the annual Springfield RV Camping and Outdoor Show at the Eastern States Exposition grounds in West Springfield on Presidents Day weekend, promoted by his camping club, Pioneer Valley Chapter 8 of the North American Family Campers Association.

Actress in free performance will bring American Revolution women to life

Rita Parisi will portray the "Women of '76" as the Agawam Cultural Council Applause Series continues at the Agawam Senior Center on Friday, March 6. This free one-woman historical performance will begin at 7 p.m.; doors open at 6:15 p.m.

Parisi is an accomplished actor who will bring to life Baroness von Riedesal, wife of a Hessian general and chronicler of life in the military camps; Prudence Wright, minutewoman and spy catcher; and Nancy Hart, a southern frontierswoman who faced the enemy and won. Attendees will learn about these women and others, both patriot and loyalist, American and foreign, who witnessed the American Revolution firsthand, and in some cases, changed the course of it.

Parisi has been entertaining audiences for over 20 years in the New England area. In 2002, she founded Waterfall Productions to create shows that highlight her passion for theater, literature and costuming. She has had the pleasure of performing these shows all over New England, New Jersey, New York and Florida. Parisi is a proud

member of SAG/AFTRA, the largest acting union in the country; some of her films have debuted at the Boston International Film Festival and Cannes film Festival.

The production sponsor for the Women of '76 is Cecco, the design office of David Cecchi. The Agawam Cultural Council also thanks the Agawam Special Police, Elaine Carlson, OMG Inc., TD Bank, and Way Finders Inc. for their support as Applause Series season sponsors.

The Senior Center is at 954 Main St., Agawam, and can be reached at 413-821-0604. This and all Applause Series events are free and open to the public. For more information, visit www.agawamcc.org.

The Agawam Cultural Council is an all-volunteer group funded, in part, by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency. The Cultural Council is charged with bringing engaging, entertaining, and educational events and opportunities in the arts, humanities, and sciences, to children and adults from Agawam and the surrounding communities.



We would like to personally thank Chief Sirois, the A.F.D. (Agawam Fire Department), and A.F.D. Retirees for honoring and recognizing our loved one, Lou Calabrese during his funeral services on January 7th and 8th. Lou served on the A.F.D. for over 40 years before retiring in 1998. His work in the fire service was not just a job it was a way for life for him. Knowing how he felt about the A.F.D., the honor guard presence during his services was a great comfort to all of us. We cannot thank Chief Sirois, firefighters and retirees enough for all their support during such a difficult time for our family.

Thank you,
The Calabrese Family

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PJs to help



The Agawam Public Library has again teamed up with the Boston Bruins to participate in their annual pajama drive to benefit Cradles to Crayons and children in care of the state Department of Children and Family Services. The library is collecting new, unused pajamas for babies, children and teens through March 15. more information, call the Agawam Library Children's Room at 413-789-1550, ext. 3. SUBMITTED PHOTO

Supper Club returns after Valentine's

The Agawam Congregational Church Supper Club will host a Post-Valentine's Evening dinner at 5 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 22. Doors will open at 4:45 p.m. in the church hall at 745 Main St., Agawam. The meal, catered by Partners Restaurant, will include sumptuous courses of fresh fruit cup, a chef's bakery choice with butter, roast turkey with stuffing, whipped potato and butternut squash, and chocolate mousse topped with whipped cream and candy valentine's hearts and served in stemmed champagne glasses. This year, the \$20 ticket also includes

entertainment, "Music of Love" by local singer Alexis Anamisis. There will be free door prizes. Tickets will be available until Wednesday, Feb. 19, and may be purchased by calling the church office at 413-786-7111 or Partners Restaurant at 413-786-0975. There will be no take-out or tickets sold at the door. Tickets are also available at the church or Partners in Feeding Hills and must be purchased in advance. The church is handicapped accessible and has ample parking.

Soup, sandwich lunch to aid Grange Hall

Community Grange 382 of Feeding Hills will hold a Soup and Sandwich Luncheon from 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 15, in the Grange hall at 47 N. West St., Feeding Hills. For a \$7 donation (\$3.50 for children under 12), diners will enjoy a homemade soup, sandwich, dessert and choice of beverage. Reservations are suggested at 413-789-2061. Proceeds of the luncheon will benefit Grange activities. In the event of inclement weather, the luncheon will be postponed to Feb. 22.

Encaustic artist to demonstrate work

The Agawam Community Artists and Artisans will welcome Pam Brown as their artist demonstrator at 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 12, at the Agawam Public Library, 750 Cooper St., Agawam. Brown will discuss her work with encaustic and resin. Light refreshments will be served at the meeting. Everyone is welcome to attend. For more information, contact Ceil Rossi at 413-207-1247 or tocarefree2@hotmail.com.

Cultural Council meeting next Tues.

The Agawam Cultural Council will meet at 7 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 18, at the Agawam Public Library, 750 Cooper St., Agawam. The meeting is open to the public. There is no cost to join or serve. Anyone with an interest in providing diverse cultural events for the town should consider joining the Cultural Council. This all-volunteer organization, appointed by the mayor and funded, in part, by the Mas-

sachusetts Cultural Council, is looking for new members. The Cultural Council is charged with bringing engaging, entertaining and educational events and opportunities in the arts, humanities and interpretive sciences, to children and adults from Agawam and the surrounding communities. For more information, visit www.agawamcc.org.

Nominations sought for service award

The Advertising Club of Western Massachusetts is seeking nominations from throughout Hampden, Hampshire, Franklin and Berkshire counties for the Pynchon Award, which recognizes citizens of this region who have rendered distinguished service to the community. Nominations are due March 15. Nominators should submit a one-page letter explaining why their nominee should be considered, including biographical information, outstanding accomplishments, examples of service to the community, organizations he or she is or has been active in, and the names, phone numbers and email addresses of at least three people who can further attest to the nominee's eligibility for induction into the Order of William Pynchon.

All nominees will be considered and researched by the Pynchon Trustees, composed of the current and five past presidents of the Advertising Club, which established the award in 1915. Nominations may be sent to William Pynchon Trustees, Advertising Club of Western Massachusetts, P.O. Box 1022, W. Springfield, MA 01090-1022, or info@adclubwm.org. Pynchon awardees are chosen by unanimous decision of the Pynchon Trustees. This year's recipients will be announced in June, with an awards ceremony scheduled for Oct. 8 at The Log Cabin in Holyoke. Awardees receive a bronze medal bearing the name and likeness of William Pynchon, founder of Springfield, and the inscription "They honor us whom we honor."

COUPLES ■ from page 1

let ourselves get into big arguments. **Cliff:** I don't have a comeback, I sit there and let her talk. And I listen to what she's telling me. That's how it's worked for us.

What advice would you give to a young couple? **Carol:** Marry someone that touches your heart, more than anything else. Find someone who listens to you, not just someone who talks at you, but understands you. Cliff listens to me even when he doesn't agree, or doesn't like what I'm saying. Also, you never go to bed mad, you always have to make up with each other, come to a compromise, or settlement before bed. Always make up, and always give each other a kiss before bed, even if it's a quick kiss or a quick apology. Always make up.

How has marriage changed, from when you first got married to now? **Cliff:** Well, we had nothing when we got married, and now we have something. We have a house, a family, and money to do what we want to do. In the beginning of our marriage, I was in the Army, and Carol came with me when I was stationed down in Kentucky, where our daughter was born. **Carol:** The rest of our three sons were born in Maine, and now we just relax at home and mainly visit with our favorite granddaughter, Grace. We get to see a lot of her, and it's nice. And honestly, I don't know what I would do without you, hunny, even after all these years.

Roy and Chi-Man Wong
How long have you been together? **Roy:** Our 42nd anniversary will be this upcoming Sunday. We got married in Hong Kong, soon after we met. We've been together ever since; we don't really spend time apart. Especially when we travel, we always travel together.

How did you meet? **Roy:** We met in Hong Kong, I had come over to the United States for a four years, and when I came back to Hong Kong I met her. We were only dating a month or so before we got married. I saw her and I was just like, "Wow! OK, she's the one." **Chi-Man:** Yeah, it was kind of like love at first sight. I knew I wanted to be with

him once I saw him. It's been many happy years. **What's the secret to staying together for so long?** **Roy:** Oh, there's no big secret. We did stay busy and she stayed home with the kids while I worked to provide for them. We had a routine, and a good one. **Chi-Man:** Stay busy. Staying busy for sure can help. We were always doing something and focusing on things, 'cause we had two children. We come here now and spend time with each other. We're learning mah jongg while we're here.

How has marriage changed from when you first got married to now? **Roy:** In the beginning we always did really sweet things, like helping with baths, or going out to the car. But when you're married for a long time, more of the sweet things fade and you do smaller, more personal things. I stay with Chi-Man all the time 'cause she doesn't speak English as well, so I help her. Things like that are more important.

What's something romantic you do for each other? **Chi-Man:** Oh, we travel, we love to go on vacations and explore. We moved to the States 10 years after we got married, so traveling is what we do now. Also we come here and spend a lot of time together here. **Roy:** We've gone to Las Vegas, California, and other warm places. Just spending time with each other and being together. In our family it's just me and her, so we take care of each other.

How do you settle arguments? **Roy:** Just take it easy. If you do get into a fight, don't let it get too big. Let it go and don't focus on it too much. If you keep arguing with each other, it will just get worse and worse, and involve things that aren't important. Learn how to let things be, and work it out as soon as possible. **Chi-Man:** Yes, always work it out. Just say sorry, let things calm down and go back to normal. It's not worth it to get angry.

What advice would you give to a young couple? **Roy:** Be sweet to each other, and keep being sweet. Sometime it's big, grand things that you do for each other, but it doesn't always have to be. Keep the sweetness and happiness around, and don't intentionally try to start fights.

LOCAL
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STAFF WRITER POSITION

Turley Publications is seeking an energetic person to fill the position of staff writer for two of its weekly publications: the *Ware River News*, which covers Ware, Hardwick and Warren, and the *Quaboag Current*, which covers the Brookfields, Sturbridge and New Braintree. This full-time position is based in our Ware office at 80 Main St. The successful candidate will have strong community journalism skills or the enthusiasm to develop them. The staff writer will cover municipal meetings, features and general news; essentially everything that unfolds in small towns. Assignments will be for both newspapers as well as other companywide publications.

Qualifications should include:

- Bachelor's degree or equivalent experience
- Own camera and photography experience preferred
- Enthusiasm for community journalism
- Ability to write clean copy in a fast-paced environment

Please email resume and three writing samples directly to Eileen Kennedy Managing Editor at ekennedy@turley.com.

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PEOPLE/ MILESTONE NEWS

As a free service for our readers, we will print all births, weddings, engagements, milestone anniversaries, major birthdays, military achievements, honors and awards. We have a "people news" form available for you to submit these listings. This material is provided to us by our readers and local institutions and we do not charge to print this content. For more information, or to submit people or milestone news for Agawam Advertiser News, please email mballway@turley.com.

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Schools & Youth

JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL HONOR ROLL

Agawam Junior High School Principal Norman Robbins recently announced the second term honor roll for the 2019-20 school year.

Grade 8: Hayden Alaimo, Breanna Allen, Christine Babinov, Marissa Bengle, Shea Bennett, Eden Berry, Aden Blair, Brandon Bourgeois, Evan Bourgeois, Coleman Bradlee, Carter Bulmer, Anthony Buoniconti, Jaylin Canales, Lilah Carr, Isabella Carra, Noah Carra, Alivia Carrier, Dominic Chen, Isabel Clarke, Matthew Collier, Cameron Cote, Kalynn Cressotti, Andrew Croteau, Ethan Danek, Kaila Dastigir, Frank Decaro, Theah DeGray, Matthew DiLullo, Hayden Dupre, Brooke Eastman, Tessa Ebreo, April Edmunds, Brett Eggleston, Philip Fini, Richard Fini, Nicholas Finley, Ava Fitzgerald, Isabella Fleury, Madison Gagnon, Isabella Garcia, Sophia Gill, Emma Gilroy, Chloe Gionfriddo, Ryan Gokey, Isabel Grechka, Olivia Gryszowka, Samantha Gryszowka, Krenare Hasani, Vincent Hill, Alexis Hurley, Andrew Ichton, Natalie Jodoin, Aiden Kane, Kaitlyn Kelley, Liam Kennedy, Milana Ko-

gan, Stephen Kopinsky, Angelina Kozhen-evsky, Mark Kukharchuk, Lauren La, Gracie LaCombe, Steel Land, Evelina Lapsova, Angelina Largay, Taylor Lopes, Jaxon Luke, Yana Lukin, Jacob MacDougall, Erin Mahoney, Gabriella Manes, Arianna Manzi, Elijah Matushevsky, Benjamin Metras, Amy Miolla, Hannah Morris, Emma Murray, David Newsome, Ezekiel NGuessan, Daniel Nguyen, Nicholas Nguyen, Emma Nicosia, Logan Nunez, Leanne Obitz, Lena Olijevskaya, Isaac Pagan, Paree Patel, Gianna Pettazzoni, Lydian Phommachanh, Michael Plakias, Thomas Plakias, McKenna Podworski, Arsa Preniqi, Maksim Radionov, Kaylee Randall, Andrew Regnier, Shawn Rivera, Vincent Rodier, Gabriel Rua, Julia Rubin, Maksim Rybnikov, Donovan Salva, Helen Sanders, Joann Schmuck, Nelli Schneider, Ilya Shlemanov, David Sholopa, Isabella Sibilial, Brayden Signet, Colin Smith, Garrett Smith, Nicholas Solitario, Nicolas Soroka, Ryan Stairs, Hunter Stark, Jeffrey Szulc, Cassidy Tetreault, Trey Theriaque, Nicholas Ugolini, Bianca Vasquez, Madeleine Veras, Autumn Vincze, Hadley

Votzakis, Amy Vu, Patrick Wagoner, Adam Ward, Gabriella Wood, Jacob Wood, Alexis Wozniak.

Grade 7: David Abramchuk, Hana Ampelakis, Mariah Aponte, Landon Ashford, Vanessa Babinov, Mattias Barbour, Leah Barker, Alyssa Beaver, Kyr Benard, Shayna Bennett, Meghan Berthiaume, Jolene Bertone-Gross, Lucas Blackak, Tanner Blake, Gabriella Bouchard, Emily Bruneau, Lillianna Bruneau, Nathan Bushee, Alivia Calvanese, Sofia Calvanese, Karina Cambur, Autumn Carmen, Vincent Catelotti, Lucy Chivers, Leah Chobotaru, Katelyn Cleavall, Evan Connery, Gabriela Cosentini, John Cote, Katherine Cote, Riley Cross, Eric Daris, Samantha Dean, Shane Defilipi, Trevor Del Barba, Briella Desautels, Kyle Douglas, Abigail Drumm, Alexandra Fillion, Nicholas Fontaine, Teagan Fullam, Madison Gagnon, Juliana Garcia, Emma Gendron, EmmaAnn Gilbert, Nadine Gilbert, Jonathan Gingeruha, Emily Gonzalez, Hailey Goulet, MiKayla Grimaldi, Natalie Hall, Lucille Hildreth, Marybeth Hinshaw, Maxwell Holloway,

Margaret Ireland, Faith Jodoin, Corabella Johnson, Riley Jorgensen, Ryan Kenney, Matthew Krause, Aleksander Kripakov, Emma LaCaresse, Kaitlyn LaFrance, Camden Lanier, Owen Lavelle, Angelina Lavrenchuk, Vincenzo Liquori, Ava Machado, Rachael Magistri, Brianna Manes, Kaitlyn Mansur, Jeremy Marcil, Noella Marsh, Pavel Maslyanskiy, Alivia McKay, Elina Michelakis, Colby Mikuszewski, Bryan Moore, Grace Moriarty, Maximillian Mudrenko, Ahminah Murchison, Ahmiyah Murchison, Michael Natale, Eric Nazarets, Arianna Nivar, Jayden Njonge, Gabriela Ochoa, Isabella Oliveira, Samuel Ostas, Madison Oyler, Joseph Parent, Hannah Parker, Avery Perry, Chase Rising, Christina Ritter, Angelo Robbins, Adam Ross, Yusuf Sarhan, Hannah Schuur, Nazar Sereida, Gavin Shlosser, Michael Sibilial, Bryson Smith, Taryn Smyth, Isabella Spaulding, Elizabeth St. Jean, Kathryn Szabla, Joseph Szemela, Melih Tomak, Rian Villareal, Salvatore Vivenzio, Nikita Vorobey, Caleb White, Genevieve White, Konnor Widmer, John Yi, Anna Zhao.

CAMPUS NOTES

Framingham State: Alexandra Bortolussi of Feeding Hills was named to the fall 2019 dean's list at Framingham State University.

Hartford: Mariangelie Beaudry, Maggie Belanger, Gabriella Harrison, Alexandra Humphries, Elizabeth Milliken and Mara Winer of Agawam, and Giovanna Recchia of Feeding Hills, were named to the fall 2019 dean's list at the University of Hartford in West Hartford, Conn.

Northeastern: Sydney Carra of Feeding Hills, a chemistry major, was named to the fall 2019 dean's list at Northeastern University in Boston.

Norwich: Anthony John Trigilio of Agawam was named to the fall 2019 dean's list at Norwich University in Northfield, Vt.

Tufts: Adam Krafcik of Agawam was named to the fall 2019 dean's list at Tufts University in Medford, Mass.

UMass-Lowell: Three local students were named to the fall 2019 dean's list at the University of Massachusetts at Lowell: Mariah Giberson-Acedo of Feeding Hills, majoring in civil engineering; Maria Moccio of Feeding Hills, majoring in mathematics; and Ray Wyckoff of Agawam, majoring in information technology.

URI: Sarah Lubarsky, Connor Pender and Torrie Sutherland of Agawam, and Sydney Cassell, Caitlin Courtney and Amanda Kiley of Feeding Hills, were named to the fall 2019 dean's list at the University of Rhode Island in Kingston, R.I.

WNEU: Several local students were named to the fall 2019 dean's list at Western New England University in Springfield. Dean's list students from Agawam were Adriana Chaika, majoring in psychology; Taylor Michele Budreau, general business; Joshua R. DeMatteo, marketing; Andy Ho, pre-pharmacy; Tara M. Negrucci, law and society; and Justin Taylor Slocum, computer science. Feeding Hills residents on the dean's list were Jack M. LaBranche, accounting; Noah P. Lovotti, mechanical engineering; Nina R. Signorelli, law and society; Joseph Ambrose Thornton, mechanical engineering; and Max V. Vorobey, health sciences with a pre-physician's assistant concentration.

Campus Notes are compiled from school press releases and parent submissions. To share your student achievement news, ask your school's press office to send an email to aan@turley.com.

Winter Reading Program runs to Feb. 22

Reading logs are available for the Agawam Public Library's Winter Reading Program, which began Tuesday.

Children and teenagers are encouraged to sign up for the program, in which they track their reading through Feb. 22. When kids reach their goal, they earn a free book to keep.

Other programs include a drop-in scav-

enger hunt around the Children's Room and a special guessing game during school vacation week in February. For more information, visit the Children's Room in the library at 750 Cooper St., Agawam, or contact Children's Librarian Pam Weingart at 413-789-1550 or pweingart@agawamlibrary.org.

Half-day rescheduled for election day

Agawam schools have rescheduled a half-day in early March to match the state's presidential primary election date.

Schools will be in session during morning hours only on Tuesday, March 3. On that day, the high school will dismiss students at 10:50 a.m.; the junior high school, 11:20 a.m.; Doering and Granger schools, 11:50 a.m.; and Clark, Phelps and Robinson

Park schools, 12:20 p.m. School lunch will not be served.

The following day, Wednesday, March 4, will be a full day of school.

Agawam schools will serve as polling places for the March 3 primary election, which will include ballots for president and for state senator. Polls will be open from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m.

AHS COUNSELING BULLETIN

College acceptances

Congratulations are in order to these students for earning these post-secondary options: Emily Bazanchuk, Framingham State University; Gianna Boyle, Framingham State University; Riley Coughlin, University of Delaware, University of Massachusetts at Amherst, University of Rhode Island, University of Utah, University of Vermont; Amaya Durand, Holyoke Community College; Emily Houle, Framingham State University, Franklin Pierce University, Plymouth State University, Worcester State University; Ally Jabry, American International College, Plymouth State University, Western New England University; Abby Majka, Westfield State University;

Suzanne Page, Sacred Heart University; Geta Preniqi, Suffolk University, Western New England University, Westfield State University; Loredana Randazzo, Clarkson University.

Scholarship information

Students should see their counselor or visit the websites below for more information or an application.

Western Massachusetts seniors who plan to attend an accredited college or technical school to study advertising, communications, marketing or graphics arts and will be attending in September 2020 are encouraged to apply for the scholarship offered by The Advertising Club of Western

Massachusetts. Applications are available at adclubwm.org and must be postmarked on or before March 31, 2020. The scholarship must be applied against tuition and fees at the school. Candidates will be judged on academic performance, extracurricular activities, community service and/or work experience, a demonstrated interest in advertising, communications, marketing or graphic design, personal recommendations, and a letter of introduction outlining future plans. More information is available at adclubwm.org.

Applications are now available for the Robert Bruno "5K Grand Sorriso" Gold Scholarship, created to honor Robert Bruno and his love of golf. Scholarship amounts are \$5,000 and \$2,000 and will be awarded to graduating AHS seniors who attended Agawam schools and who have demonstrated excellent character and involvement with the AHS Golf Team. Skill level in playing golf is not a criterion. Application forms and instructions are available in Naviance and must be postmarked on or before Feb. 28.

The William R. Rooney Scholarship is available to high school seniors from Hampden County who have been on an IEP or 504 plan for two years. Visit horacesmithfund.org for an application. Applicants must identify their application as specifically for the William R. Rooney Scholarship. The dead-

line is March 15.

The Walter S. Barr Scholarship is available to residents to Hampden County who are members of the senior class at their local public or private secondary schools. Awards will be made on the basis of all available information, including school records, recommendations and examination scores. Awards will be continued through the four-year course if the student's record and need justify such continuance. Consideration will be given to both the merit and financial need of the applicant. See horacesmithfund.org for details. The deadline is March 15.

Professional Women in Construction, Connecticut Chapter, will offer approximately 15 scholarships to students (male or female) enrolled in undergraduate or graduate degree programs in construction, construction management, interior design, architecture, landscape

design, or civil, mechanical, structural, and electrical engineering. The application is available at pwcusa.org/chapters/about-connecticut/connecticut-scholarship/ and is due March 25.

Applications are now available for the Emily K. Dushane Memorial Foundation Scholarship. Applicants must be graduating from Agawam High School in 2020 and must be attending a college or university (full-time) this fall. Applications are available in Naviance and are due by April 1.

Applications are now available for the Franco Liquori Memorial Scholarship. Applicants must be an Agawam High School graduate and must have attended Benjamin Phelps School. In addition, the candidate must demonstrate need and academic ability. Scholarships will be made to one male and one female. The committee

may require a personal interview. Applications are available in Naviance and must be submitted by April 1.

The Agawam Rotary Club awards the Ray and Reita McCarroll Memorial Scholarship scholarships to seniors from Agawam and West Springfield. The Selection Committee will choose students who best exemplify Rotary's principal motto, "Service Above Self," and who show leadership abilities and a desire to make a contribution to their home, school, community and country. The applicant must be a high school senior residing in Agawam or West Springfield and be attending or scheduled to attend an accredited academic or technical college in the month of September following graduation from high school. Applications must be forwarded no later than April 1. Please see Naviance for an application.

The Agawam Rotary Club

awards scholarships to seniors residing in Agawam, including the Beverly M. Ladizki and David A. Ladizki Scholarship. Applicants must be a graduating high school senior residing in Agawam with intent to attend law school. Applicants must be scheduled to attend an accredited academic college or university in the month of September following graduation from high school. The application deadline is April 1 and is available in Naviance.

The Agawam Soccer Association Scholarship application is now available. All applicants must be seniors who have participated in ASA soccer as a player and/or other ASA soccer-related activity such as coaching or refereeing. A grade average of B or higher must be maintained. Applications are available in Naviance and are due before April 1.

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Opinion

OUR VIEW

Contested race will yield a better senator

Voters in the state Senate district formerly represented by Donald Humason should be glad to have a choice in next month's special election, though perhaps a little disappointed that there are only two candidates.

Just one Democrat and one Republican are on the special primary election ballots for March 3. That's enough to guarantee a contested race in the March 31 general election, but less interest than one would expect for an open seat in a district with a history of continuously re-electing incumbents, covering a collection of towns that have shown they are willing to elect, and re-elect, both Democrats and Republicans. Not to mention the timing of the election—standing alone in March, affording all the state representatives, city councilors, selectmen and School Committee members in the district the opportunity for a “free run” at the state Senate without having to give up re-election to their current seats.

With such a diversity of opinion on display within the two major parties — just look at the wide range of options in this year's Democratic presidential primary, and at the large and varied field for the Republican nomination in 2016 — it would have been nice to see several would-be senators step forward, to present voters with a primary fight in addition to the general election.

Instead, state Rep. John Velis of Westfield staked out his claim early as the front-runner for the Democratic nomination and quickly moved to make himself the prohibitive favorite. Though he only represents one of the district's cities, he's been showing up at community events throughout the region for months — long before he “officially” declared his candidacy.

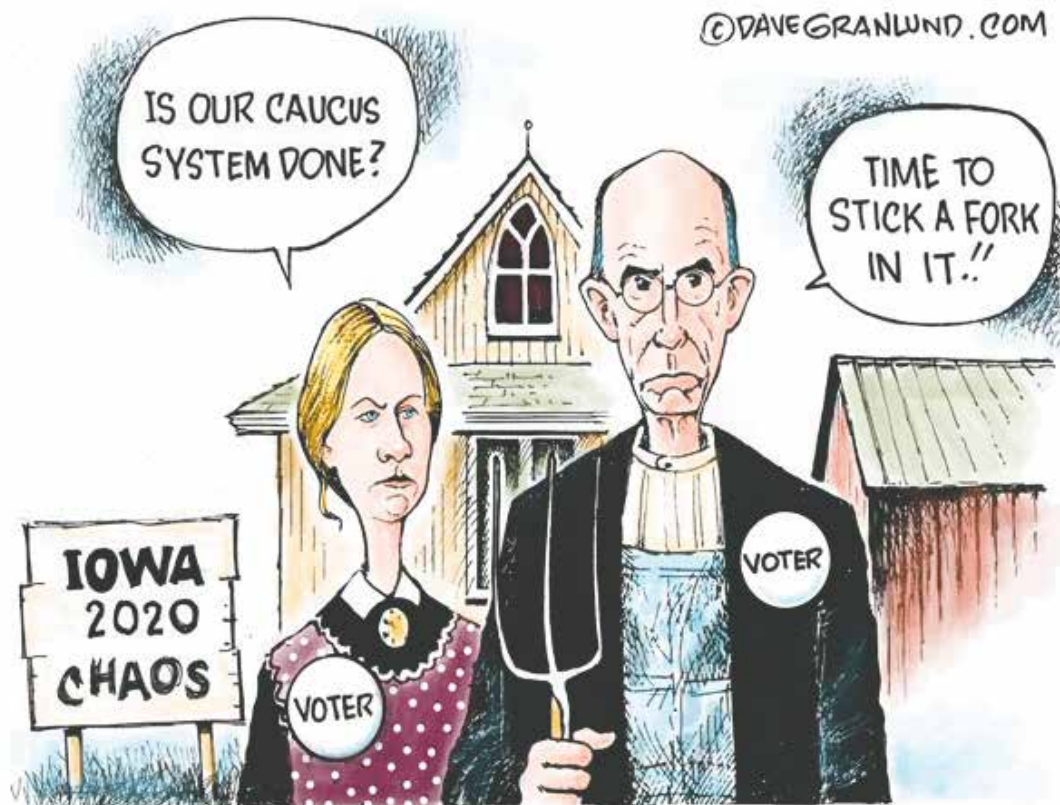
On the Republican side, it looked for a little while like the party wouldn't have a nominee at all, after decades of GOP representation through Humason and Mike Knapik. Neither state Rep. Nicholas Boldyga, R-Southwick, nor any of the Republican or conservative-leaning town officials in the district, seemed interested in the job. John Cain, a Southwick resident and Agawam businessman, instead suspended his 2020 congressional campaign to run for state Senate.

The district has a history of clean-fought elections that nonetheless feature candidates with differing views. That has something to do with the cities and towns that make up the district, with a large mass of urban, liberal voters along the northern tier — Easthampton, Holyoke, Chicopee — and a group of rural, very conservative towns in the southwestern corner — Granville, Montgomery, Russell, Southwick, Tolland. In the middle are the coveted swing votes of Agawam and Westfield.

Each of these regions deserves to be represented in the March campaign, and with candidates from both major parties, it looks like they will be. A contested election will allow Humason's successor to be chosen in a debate on the issues, rather than a coronation. It will force both sides to answer questions and make promises not only to their own base, but their own moderates and to swing voters from the other side. No matter which of these candidates is elected in March, he will be a better and more accountable Senator after having gone through the process.

Contested elections are always good. This one will be no exception. It's only a shame that voters won't have a choice to make in the primary elections, too.

What do you think about the election? Send your letters to the editor to aan@turley.com.



FAITH MATTERS

What does God require?

If you think about it, people of faith — all faiths — embark on a journey of self-discovery. Improving ourselves; learning new things; making new friends; helping people; becoming changed people. We all have our own struggles, yet inevitably we change. And along the way we might come to wonder what it is that God requires of us.

God gave us a simple formula to understand what is required of us. Found in the Hebrew Scriptures (Micah 6:8), it says: “He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.”

First, how do we act justly? The Hebrew word for justice is intended to mean more than “getting even” or “making others pay for what they did.” It means the restoration of balance, the righting of relationships; it isn't only fairness or rewarding good and punishing evil. The kind of justice God requires is making sure everyone has what they need; making sure we lift others up in prayer and offer our help to the most needy people among us.

Second, how do we love mercy, or kindness? The very way this is worded tells us that it's not merely the doing that is needed. What is needed is that we “love” mercy, that we “love” kindness. It's not just doing the act, but an intense appreciation for doing the right thing. The act has to be done when it is called for, but it has to spring from a place of love. It has to be sincere. We have to love doing it.

Third, how do we walk humbly with God? One way this is translated is “to live in communion with God.” It is to embrace the notion that God is with

us. God who created us, sustains us and redeems us also walks with us every step of the way. That alone should keep us humble! We're worth a lot to God! We mean a lot to God! God calls us not only children, but friends, and God walks with us.

As long as injustice, poverty, and oppression exist anywhere in our world, we need to be reminded of these words in Micah 6:8. It doesn't matter that they come from the Old Testament Hebrew Scriptures — it is still the word of God! Do justice. Love kindness. Walk humbly. That is what brings about a transformed life.

But these things that God requires of us are not listed to show us how we can earn God's favor. They are listed to tell us how we are to respond to God's favor. Because God so loved us, this is how we are to return the favor to others. God chose us. God sees something inside each of us that can be used in service for other people.

I saw a good sign outside of the Powder Mill School in Southwick. It said: “January 1 is the first blank page of a 366 page book. Write a good one! (Remember: it's a leap year.)” As we write the books of our lives this year, let's remember to ask ourselves: “What does God require of us?” The list in Micah 6:8 tells us. God yearns for us to seek justice and to love mercy and to walk humbly with God in response to all God has done for us. We are blessed, and God asks us to be blessings to others in return. Amen.

Ken Blanchard is the pastor at Agawam United Methodist Church on Mill Street in Feeding Hills.



Ken Blanchard

Our Back Pages

From yesteryear's editions of the Agawam Advertiser News, compiled by Michael Ballway.

A year ago: The City Council on Feb. 19, 2019, approved \$160,000 in Community Preservation Act spending to make improvements at local parks. The new equipment includes 16 new aluminum bleachers to replace the last of the wooden stands at youth sports facilities such as Borgatti Field, St. John's Field and Shea Field; and rubberized playground surfaces at Borgatti Park and Maynard Street, the last two town playgrounds that had not been converted.

Five years ago: Officials and residents gathered at the Agawam Municipal Golf Course on Feb. 12, 2015, to bid

farewell to Deborah Dachos after a 33-year career as Agawam's first town planning and economic development director. “She brought a deep passion and a lot of integrity to the job as our first and only planner in town history,” commented Mayor Richard Cohen.

Ten years ago: The Agawam Advertiser News of Feb. 18, 2010, included a historical sketch of Shaer's Market, a neighborhood grocery store on Springfield Street that served as an anchor and gathering place for the Feeding Hills community in the days before large supermarkets came to town. Jim, Joe and Tom Shaer — three of the six children of market owners Domit and Eva Shaer — recalled the lessons in responsibility and customer service they learned in the family business.



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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

must include a name, address, and daytime telephone number for author verification purposes. We do not publish anonymous letters. All letters are subject to editing for content and length. The deadline is Monday at noon. Please send letters to Agawam Advertiser News, care of Turley Publications Inc., 24 Water St., Palmer, MA 01069, or e-mail aan@turley.com.

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Opinion

Poetry Corner

Valentine's Day

Hearts, flowers, chocolates remind us it's Valentine's Day

A day set aside to spread love and cheer
To all those who we hold dear

Roses in the pretty vintage vase
Put a smile on her face

Love songs on the radio for us to hear and sing along
Oh, how we remember that old song!

From the Poetry Circle
at Heritage Hall North

NEWS & FEATURES

As a paper of record, we attempt to cover all general news, personality profiles, and community features that we know about. This includes all selectmen and school committee meetings as well as spot planning board, board of health, finance, and other town meetings determined by the issue's relevance to our readers. There are the annual major community event features that we should always cover, but we are more than open to suggestions of other features to celebrate the fabric of our communities and their many interesting occupants. Our loyal advertisers provide funding for this paid staff coverage.

For more information on news or community features for the Agawam Advertiser News, please email mballway@turley.com.

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When heart art is everywhere

In February, the heart themes are everywhere. During the early days and remaining weeks of the month the National Heart Association advocates learning about heart health for everyone no matter what their age..

Then, in New England, Feb. 14, Valentine's Day arrives near the middle of the month bringing warmth into typically dark, dreary, wintry days.

February is also the time when classrooms are brightened with red and pink hearts on themed bulletin boards, and in school corridors. It's when brick and mortar merchants decorate aisles with intriguing, lovely household items offering sales that make your heart skip a beat or two. And, it's when grocery stores offer all shapes and sizes of Valentine boxes of cookies, chocolates and magnificent deserts.

Heart art and Valentines appear just about everywhere. Even after February.

Reportedly, "Once upon an almost lifetime ago, because of an overcrowded airline flight, a couple unexpectedly got 'bumped' when returning from a business trip. Surprisingly they qualified for free, round-trip tickets to anywhere in the U.S.A."



Joan E. B. Coombs

They used the free tickets to fly to sunny Florida visiting family and experiencing new, first-hand southern hospitality. On a

Sunday morning they visited a nearby church. They met a "Hi Ya'll" visitor hostess who put a bright red, bold-white-lettered heart sticker reading: 'YOU ARE LOVED!!' onto their clothing. Later on in the morning service, all visitors wearing the red-heart stickers were welcomed again.

Further conversations revealed: "After enjoying days visiting family, sun and surf, on their flight home- for sentimental reasons, the wife wanted to savor warm memories and put her 'I LOVE YOU' sticker inside her pocket-sized calendar. But, her husband's sticker was missing."

About a week later, another business appointment brought that couple to a neighboring state, less than a two-hour drive away, to a computer company's large corporate headquarters.

"Want to come along?" the wife was asked. Reportedly, within a single bound, office work, laptop, light snacks and coffee were packed.

Enjoying the comfortable, accommodating lobby, the visiting spouse watched her husband and throngs of other business

participants wait in line and have his/her name checked and get their identification badges.

Waiting was easy. Computer work done; informational presentation over. Quickly the couple joined the bustling crowd winding through the lobby, waiting for elevators, then streaming out the doors, down the carpeted corridors and outside into the tiered, concrete parking garage.

When finally driving onto the clear, open highway, a sunny cloudless sky added to the feeling of a successful day with a good, solid, sales and product presentation given by driver for his employer's business firm.

Reportedly, "The couple decided to drive on the thruway. Then stop for dinner. About 45 minutes later they pulled into a restaurant's parking lot. When reaching to release his seatbelt, the driver saw a flaming-red, 'YOU ARE LOVED!' heart sticker stuck knee-high on his left pants leg."

Apparently the conversation went like this: "How long has this been here?"

"WHAT'S been WHERE?"

Gasps. Groans. Over-all embarrassment. "But, maybe it was the heartiest presentation ever?" Side-splitting, knee-slapping, tear-streaming laughter rocked the little parked car.

Hmm. Reportedly, after February heart art can be anywhere.

Early voting set for presidential primary election

Agawam and Feeding Hills residents will be able to cast early ballots in the week before the March 3 presidential primary election.

Polls will be open at the Senior Center, 954 Main St., Agawam, from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday, Feb. 24-28, with additional evening hours until 7 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 27. Any registered voter in town may participate. Unlike absentee voting, this early voting period does not require a medical, religious or travel-based

exemption.

Registered voters have the option to request an early voting ballot through the mail. Applications are available at www.sec.state.ma.us/ele. They may be filled out and mailed to Town Clerk, 36 Main Street, Agawam, MA 01001.

Early voting in person is just like voting on Election Day, except that residents of all precincts will vote at the Senior Center. Voters arrive during the designated hours, check in with the warden and cast their

ballots. Once someone has voted early, he or she will be marked on the voter rolls to prevent double-voting.

Participants in early voting, like voters on March 3, will be able to vote in the presidential primary election, as well as the primary for the special state senate election. Registered members of the Democratic, Republican, Libertarian and Green-Rainbow parties can vote on their party's ballot; political independents ("unenrolled") can choose to vote on any party's primary ballot.

Those who do not vote in the early voting period can cast their ballots on March 3. Polls will be open 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. at the usual polling places in Agawam and Feeding Hills.

The last day to register to vote, or change parties, in time for the March 3 election is Wednesday, Feb. 12. The clerk's office on the first floor of Town Hall will be open until 8 p.m. that day.

For more information, contact the town clerk's office at 413-786-0400, ext. 8215.

PIPELINE ■ from page 1

environment and public health.

"As a relatively new homeowner in Agawam, this project scares me," said Abby Massaro.

She read from a letter by Linda Grimaldi, a neighbor of the Tennessee Gas compressor station on Suffield Street. Grimaldi wrote that Tennessee Gas was a decent neighbor until its acquisition by Kinder Morgan, and the expansion of its line into Suffield two years ago. That work brought with it noise and health effects such as headaches and nosebleeds. The company no longer advises neighbors of loud "blow-downs" before they happen, and customer service in general has declined, Grimaldi's letter said. She also mentioned the 2017 incident in which a Tennessee Gas contractor dumped water contaminated with carcinogens at the compressor station property, where it could seep into groundwater.

Pipeline opponents also mentioned the 2018 natural gas pipeline explosions in Lawrence and neighboring towns.

Susan Grossberg, who had organized a petition to call the public hearing, said officials in Easthampton, Holyoke and Northampton had rejected expansion of natural gas infrastructure in their cities, which eliminates the need for extra pipeline capacity in Agawam. She and Nancy Bobskill said the pipeline, if built, will become an unused "stranded asset," and a waste of more than \$50 million of ratepayers' money.

"In the big picture, it's simply a matter of doing the right thing," agreed William Bobskill. "If we've got three mayors of neighboring cities who are standing against this, why aren't we getting on board? We just don't need this thing."

Wendy Hollis said the pipeline will inevitably leak methane, a greenhouse gas, and have adverse health effects on residents along Suffield Street.

"If we don't need this gas, why are we

subjecting ourselves to this level of toxins?" she asked.

After the public hearing closed, Council President Christopher Johnson gave a long summary of the issue, saying the town has no authority to approve or disapprove the project. Denying the easement would simply mean swapping the \$150,000 payment for an eminent domain court case, which would likely pay less.

"I happen to agree with a lot of what you've said, but I have to vote what's in the best interest of the town," Johnson said. "We're not being asked to approve the project. We're being asked only to approve the expansion of easements."

Rosemary Sandlin was the only city councilor to vote against the easement.

"It's about principle, and all our young people who are experiencing more and more kinds of cancers," she said.

City Councilor Cecilia Calabrese said she has confidence that Henry Kozloski and the town Conservation Commission would be vigilant about enforcing environmental restrictions on the company's work.

Johnson did disagree with some of the citizen speakers' assertions. He said the high-pressure Tennessee Gas network cannot be compared with low-pressure retail networks, such as those operated by Columbia Gas. Tennessee Gas is subject to stringent federal laws and is "100 times" safer than local service pipelines.

He also said regardless of what local mayors have said, Tennessee Gas has a contract with Columbia Gas and Holyoke Gas and Electric to provide a natural gas supply. He said documents from the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission show 60 percent of the need for the new pipeline is to replace existing capacity in other pipelines that will be bypassed, and both Columbia (90 percent) and Holyoke (10 percent) have promised they will take advantage of the new capacity.

"If they can't demonstrate [a need for] the additional capacity, FERC won't let them go forward with the project," Johnson said.



Susan Grossberg points to a diagram of the Tennessee Gas Pipeline network on Feb. 10 while Town Solicitor Stephen Buoniconti, left, and City Councilor Dino Mercadante, right, look on. PHOTOS BY MICHAEL BALLWAY



Marcia Haas expresses her opposition to Tennessee Gas Pipeline expansion in Agawam during the Feb. 10 City Council meeting.

Party honoring former DPW foreman again aids animal shelter

On Saturday, Feb. 8, hosted by and at the Italian Sporting Club, more than 50 friends and coworkers of Jim Flynn, the Agawam Water Department foreman who unexpectedly died in the fall of 2015, celebrated his 66th birthday with the fifth annual Flynnner's Birthday Party. The event honors Flynn's memory and benefits his favorite charity, the Dakin Humane Society, this year raising over \$1,200 for a five-year total of over \$5,000.

Attendees enjoyed Pajer's Superette antipasto, Valenti's Pizza and Jim's signature "Flynnner's World Famous Texas Chili." Included was an Irish bless-

ing given by "Monsignor" Ed Ennis and a John Jameson Irish Whiskey toast, sponsored by Ed Adamski, both longtime friends of Flynn. Attendees viewed a display of and were able to take their favorites from Flynn's thousands of photos. One of his life's passions was photography, as was skiing throughout the world.

Paula Montagna, the event organizer, thanked Italian Sporting Club President Albert Sapelli and event sponsors Fred Pajer, Joe Valenti and Ed Adamski. Next year's event will again be held at the Italian Sporting Club in Agawam on Saturday, Feb. 13, 2021.



Longtime friends Harold Ellis and retired DPW coworker Larry Montagna share memories of the late Jim Flynn last weekend at the annual fundraiser held in his honor. SUBMITTED PHOTOS



Event organizer Paula Montagna's grandchildren, Mason Ward and Nora Hazelwood, admire some of Flynn's thousands of photographs.



Agawam DPW alumni John Conti and Larry Montagna enjoy Valenti's Pizza at the fifth annual Flynnner's Birthday Party.



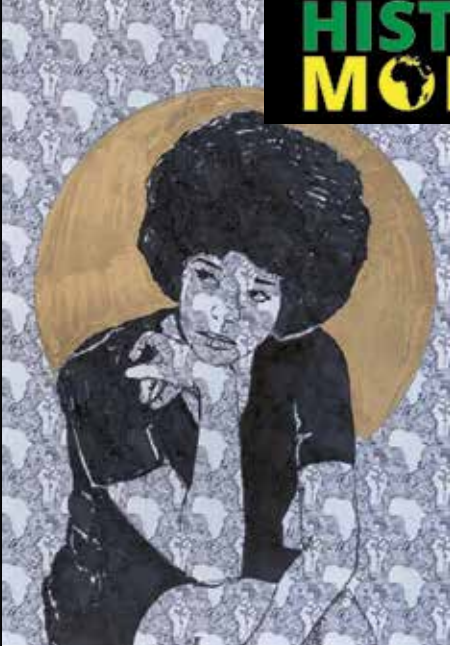
"Monsignor" Ed Ennis gives the traditional Irish blessing and toast in Jim Flynn's memory



Danny Barrett, Jodi Ramah, Nancy DeSimone and Doreen Boroweic enjoy Pajer's antipasto.


THIS is STCC

STCC HONORS
BLACK HISTORY MONTH



Amy H. Carberry
Fine Arts Gallery
Fallacies:
Black Identity Extremist =
Black Identity Enthusiast,
Kiayani Douglas
February 3-29
Artist Talk February 27
at The Forum
(Learning Commons)
Kiayani Douglas has spent the last three years developing an interdisciplinary body of work called Black Identity Enthusiast. B.I.E. is a body of work geared towards curating conversations rooted in race history and privilege. She creates workshops where students of all disciplines can learn about American Black History, while making connections to Math, Science, History and literature. A series of student workshops and art faculty will be held throughout the month.

Supporting students.
Transforming lives.





Harold Ellis, Marilyn Perreault and Sue Conlon share memories of Jim Flynn's picnic gatherings at his cottage on Echo Lake in Leverett.

SATURDAY

FEB 22

7:30 PM

AT SYMPHONY HALL

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with Maestro Rhodes





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COLLEEN ■ from page 1

time at Chez Josef.

The idea of representing her hometown in the parade took root when she was 10 and her mother brought her to the colleen coronation ceremony, to cheer for one of her friends' daughters. She remembers being allowed to try on the colleen's sash.

"Since I put that thing on, I was like, 'I want to do this.'"

She's looking forward to more than the parade. As colleen, Thomson will have a full schedule over the next month, including meetings with her counterparts from neighboring communities.

"We do a lot with the other towns' colleens," Thomson said. "We're going to learn to Irish dance, so that'll be fun."

Thomson said she faced some difficult competition during the Feb. 8 coronation.

"I was with an amazing group of girls," she said. "Everyone deserved to win."

Accompanying Thomson on the float will be five members of her court — the runners-up in the competition, Brianna Benjamin, Arianna Donovan, Tessa Fitzgerald, Eme Oberheim and Brianna Viens. Like Thomson, all are seniors at Agawam High School.

The colleen was chosen by three judges from out of town, with no connection to any of the contestants, Doreen Doyle of Springfield, Diane Gould of Westhampton and Kathy Viens of Holyoke. The judges said they were looking for poise and personality, education and community service, and a well-rounded individual. They agreed that all six were strong contestants.

"If we could pick them all, we'd pick them all," said Viens. "Any one of the six could easily fit the bill."

Award winners

As part of the coronation ceremony, each of the contestants was invited to write an essay about her Irish heritage. The winner of the William Pfau Essay Contest was Eme Oberheim, who wrote about her



Contestants in the colleen competition hold hands as the results are announced. Pictured, from left, are Brianna Benjamin, Arianna Donovan, Tessa Fitzgerald, Eme Oberheim, Emma Thomson and Brianna Viens. PHOTOS BY MICHAEL BALLWAY



William Pfau essay contest winner Eme Oberheim stands with the subject of her essay, her "Poppa," Michael Clark.



Bailey Thomas, the 2019 colleen, crowns her successor Emma Thomson at the Agawam St. Patrick's Committee event on Feb. 8.



Parade Marshal Laurie O'Connell receives her sash and shillelagh from St. Patrick's Committee member Mary Jo Safford.



Erin Consedine, a 2018 member of the Colleen's Court, helps 2020 court member Brianna Viens with her sash.



Agawam's 2020 colleen, Emma Thomson, third from left, stands with the members of her court, from left, Brianna Viens, Eme Oberheim, Tessa Fitzgerald, Arianna Donovan and Brianna Benjamin.



The colleen contest judges were, from left, Kathy Viens, Diane Gould and Doreen Doyle.



Mayor William Sapelli recognizes Anthony Boido as recipient of the 2020 Citizenship Award.

to adults every year. Laurie O'Connell, the parade marshal, described her years of volunteering with the committee as "all lots of hard work but tons of fun." She also thanked her family, particularly her grandchildren.

"What I do is for them," said O'Connell. "They mean everything to me."

Kay Benson, who received the Anne Sullivan Award, read a history of the award's namesake, who was a Feeding Hills resident who became Helen Keller's teacher and friend.

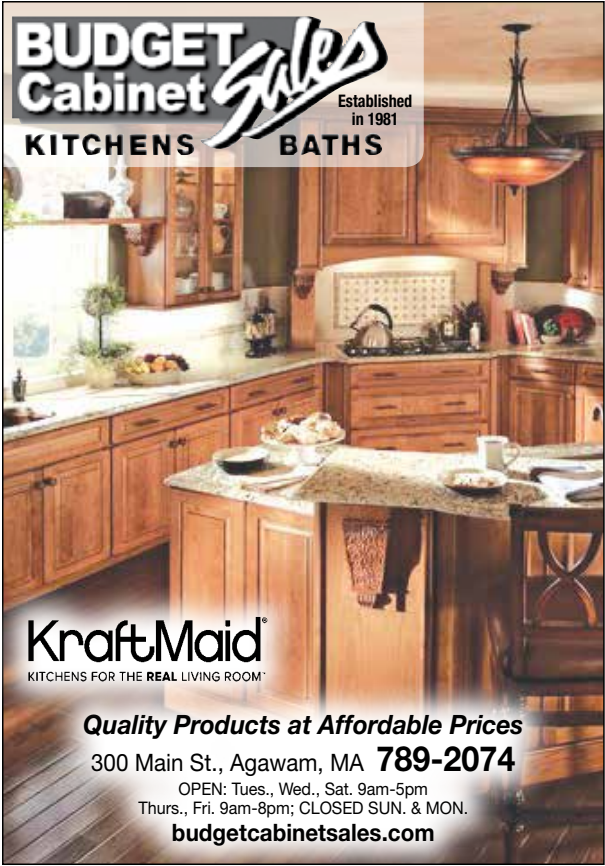
Anthony Boido, winner of the Citizenship Award, used his speech to draw attention to some of the causes

for which he has volunteered, including Shriners Hospital for Children in Springfield. He said he was taken by the young patients at the hospital.

"If you ever need to feel this inspiration and feel this strength, please step into Shriners Hospital," he said. "It's an inspiration to me, it's an inspiration to my family. They are truly strong individuals and they give me so much inspiration."

The three award winners will walk or ride at the head of the Agawam contingent in the annual parade, which kicks off at 11 a.m. Saturday, March 22, on the streets of Holyoke.

BUDGET
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SPORTS

MIAA

Tournaments would include half of state's H.S. teams

Editor's note: This is the third of a four-part series to break down the statewide tournament proposal, what it is, its effect on the Western Mass. region, the challenges, and how your athletic directors and coaches feel about it.

By Gregory A. Scibelli
gscibelli@turley.com

The Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association's Tournament Management Committee states that between 46 and 55 percent of teams will qualify for their division's respective tournament in most of the major sports.

But the question on the minds of many Western Massachusetts athletic directors, coaches, athletes, and parents is, how many of those teams will be from Western Massachusetts?

The answer, essentially, is almost as many teams that qualify now.

Now, how is that possible?

Thanks to a compromise during the committee's process of formulating a proposal, any team that finishes with a .500 record or above will qualify for the state tournament. Those teams that are not power-ranked in the top 32 (or 16 in some cases), will get an opportunity to play into the tournament. Teams below the No. 32-ranked team will be seeded lower and have to "play-in" to the tournament through preliminary round games.

What that will leave out under Western Massachusetts' current format, is the ability to for teams that place first or second in their leagues to qualify.

Under current rules, leagues in Western Mass., which are aligned by the Pioneer Valley Interscholastic Athletic Association, send their first and second place finishers to tournament regardless of their overall records. It's a small percentage of the teams that qualify, but it does happen consistently each season.

However, with an expansion to a fifth division for major sports like baseball, soccer, basketball, softball, football, and girls volleyball, the competition might allow for more teams to qualify for tournament.

According to the MIAA proposal, the sports that will have four divisions: Tennis, lacrosse, and field hockey, the MIAA suggests that between 53 and 62 percent of teams in the state will qualify for those tournaments. Ice hockey will have an estimated 62 percent qualify for tournament across three divisions.

There is also a provision in the proposal to allow the sport committee to create subdivisions, such as a Division "1A." However, the parameters how and why that would happen are not clear.

HOCKEY

Brownies drop league game to Bombers



Ryan Laudato turns toward the Westfield goal. PHOTOS BY LISA THOMAS-DUFRESNE



Kannon Grover pushes a wrist shot toward the goal.

WEST SPRINGFIELD – The Agawam High School ice hockey team certainly has seen its share of struggles the past few years and most certainly will not make the playoffs this season. But the Brownies have had some encouraging performances this year,

including a 4-2 loss against Westfield last week. It was the second time in 11 days the two teams had seen each other. The other game was also close, with Westfield coming out on top 2-0. Agawam is 2-11-2 this season.



Defender Dylan Sliech tries to keep possession of the puck.



Michael Beaudry makes his way up the ice pursued by three Bombers.

BASKETBALL

Falcons edge Brownies in Suburban League action

The loss further buries Agawam's playoff hopes

By Bob Schron
sports@turley.com

WILBRAHAM –Jason Ofcarcik of Minnechaug scored 18 points including nine in the decisive fourth quarter and the Falcons held off Agawam, 63-60 in a Suburban League game. With its 55-45 victory over West Side Thursday, the Falcons had won six straight games heading into the final weeks of league play.

In a back-and-forth game which included multiple ties and lead changes, Minnechaug (10-6, 4-1) and Agawam (3-12) were tied, 44-all going into the fourth quarter.



Josiah Bass-Collins emerges from a crowd to shoot.

PHOTOS BY DAVID HENRY WWW.SWEETDOGHOTOS.COM



Max Blanton gets the layup ahead of his opponent

Sports

The Week Ahead

Boys Basketball		
Friday, Feb. 14	Away	Westfield 7 p.m.
Monday, Feb. 17	Away	Chicopee Comp 7 p.m.
Wednesday, Feb. 19	Home	Minnechaug 7 p.m.
Girls Basketball		
Thursday, Feb. 13	Away	Minnechaug 7 p.m.
Tuesday, Feb. 18	Home	Hampshire 7 p.m.
Ice Hockey		
Tuesday, Feb. 13	Away	Longmeadow 6:30 p.m.
Tuesday, Feb. 18	Home	Southwick 12 p.m.
Wrestling		
Saturday, Feb. 15	Away	Western Mass. Meet (at Central) 10 a.m.

MIAA Bracketology returning soon

March Madness is coming, and for the second straight year, Turley Sports will bring you “MIAA bracketology.”

In two weeks, in our February 27 and 28 issues of all Turley Publications papers, the sports department will be presenting its picks for the MIAA Western Massachusetts Tournaments. There will be four brackets for boys basketball, and four brackets for girls basketball.

The brackets will detail our picks to make it all the way to our own sectional championships, held right at the famed Curry Hicks Cage on the campus of the University of Massachusetts-Amherst.

Will we be right, or will we be wrong? Who knows. But we sincerely hope our readers enjoy following the progress of the Western Mass. tournament, that is one of the most popular tournaments that takes place in the year. Whether

it is Division 1 or Division 4, the basketball tournaments are some of most exciting action of the year.

The brackets we will be presenting in two weeks will reflect simple guesses on the part of Turley Sports with short commentary below each bracket to explain our brackets. We encourage you to compare our brackets to your own. We hope you enjoy watching the tournament unfold from Feb. 24 when the first round is scheduled to begin, all the way to Curry Hicks Cage on March 7 and 8.

The tournament brackets are scheduled to be released on Saturday, Feb. 22. The Turley Sports bracketology will be prepared the following day prior to the start of the tournament, and then will available online through our turley.com website and will be published in the papers available Thursday, Feb. 27 and Friday, Feb. 28. Happy tournament to all!

TOURNEY ■ from page 10

Also still unclear is how the MaxPreps power rankings system would work. While a sample ranking system using last season's soccer playoffs as an example, plenty of Western and Central Mass. teams qualified.

But it is still unclear exactly how MaxPreps would rank the teams in Western Massachusetts, how it would take into account the diversity in the teams Western Mass. plays against with the vast geography, versus the density in Eastern Massachusetts.

The proposal also does not list how many games a team must play to be considered for postseason play. Right now, most seasons average between 16 and 20 games. Lacrosse, field hockey, volleyball, and soccer are known for 16-18 game seasons while baseball, softball, and basketball often play between 18

and 20 games.

One part of the proposal does lay out the home and away situation. It states that preliminary play-in games, and the first three rounds, the round of 32, 16, and 8 (quarterfinals) will be at the site of the home seed. However, all home sites have to meet MIAA standards to host a home game. If a site does not, the home school athletic director can attempt to find an acceptable site, or the lower seed would host the game. In extreme cases, the tournament director will be charged with finding an acceptable site.

Date determined for final vote

The MIAA has reached a decision on holding a special meeting on the proposal. The statewide tournament proposal will be voted on Feb. 28 at a special meeting at 9:30 a.m. at Assabet Valley Technical High School in Marlborough.

Bay State Games begins partnership with Gentle Giant Moving Company

WOBURN – Bay State Games and Gentle Giant Moving Company are excited to announce a partnership. Through this partnership, Gentle Giant will serve as the official moving and storage company of Bay State Games for the Summer Games.

“The Bay State Games’ mission of promoting personal development, education, physical fitness, teamwork, and sportsmanship directly aligns with Gentle Giant’s core focus of developing exemplary leaders and our history of employing high level athletes. We’re very excited to be able to support the Bay State Games and connect with their network of athletes,” says Craig Averett, Gentle Giant Recruiting Manager and 1995 Bay State Games competitor.

Of the budding relationship, Bay State Games Executive Director, Kevin Cummings says, “since 1982, Bay State Games has produced programs that develop students, athletes, and the future leaders of tomorrow. Gentle Giant shares many of these same values and we look forward to our partnership which will focus on providing opportunities for student-athletes.”

Gentle Giant has a 40-year history of hiring the best and brightest athletes at their offices across New England and in several other regional locations. If you are looking for a paid work out, a flexible schedule, and competitive benefits please visit www.gentlegiant.com/careers for more information or to fill out the preliminary application

For questions, email info@bay-stategames.org or call 781-932-6555.

Thunderbirds fall to Hershey Bears

HERSHEY, Penn. – The Springfield Thunderbirds (26-23-2-0) could not come up with answers after a two-goal second period burst from the Hershey Bears (30-15-2-3), who came away with a 5-2 win on Saturday night inside the Giant Center.

Springfield turned to Ryan Bednard in net, and the rookie had a great bounce-back first period just three nights after he was pulled after 20 minutes and three goals against in Hartford. This first frame was Bednard at his best, as he had answers for all 10 Hershey shots.

His best stop of the night and possibly of his young rookie season came with Hershey on a power play in the closing minutes of the period and Phil Maillet stationed on the back post with a seemingly open net. Instead, Bednard sprawled to his left and got the left-hand catching mitt up to snatch the goal away and get the game into the intermission scoreless.

The T-Birds’ power play had two chances in the first 12 minutes of the period to get an advantage, but Hershey’s Eastern Conference-best penalty kill did the job on two chances.

Hershey finally cracked Bednard at 2:40 when Axel Jonsson-Fjallby picked up a Springfield turnover on the right-wing side in center and snapped a shot under the crossbar to give the Bears the 1-0 lead.

After Maillet got snakebitten in the first, he got his payback at 9:23 of the second period after Christian Djoos deked into the high slot before finding Maillet on the right post for a tap-in to extend the lead to 2-0.

In desperate need of a jolt, Henrik Borgstrom provided just that for the T-Birds at 15:43 as he lifted a wrist shot from the high slot through a screen and past Hershey goaltender Pheonix Copley to cut the lead in half, 2-1.

The Bears then extended their lead with their first of two power play goals at 3:58 of the final period as Djoos beat Bednard under the crossbar from the right circle to up the Hershey advantage to 3-1.

Alex Alexeyev joined in on the defense scoring for Hershey when he slipped a left-circle wrist shot through Bednard at 12:08. Joel Lowry would answer that goal 35 seconds later to pick up his eighth point against Hershey in six games this season. The goal was Lowry’s seventh of the year.

With time winding down, Maillet got open at the back post and finished off a cross-crease feed from Alexeyev on the power play at 16:34 to put the finishing touches on the Bears’ win.

BASKETBALL ■ from page 1

But then Ofcarcik took over. A 6’3” sophomore, Ofcarcik made all the big plays down the stretch to assure the win. With an opportunity to tie it in the closing seconds, Agawam committed a critical turnover.

“Jason has had an outstanding season for us,” said Minnechaug coach Mike Orzech. “He’s been consistent. He plays both ends of the floor. You could say he’s our hardest worker.

“But all of our players compete at a very high level.”

This was apparent against Agawam. The underdog visitors constructed a pair of runs in each half which set the Falcons back on their heels. Leading 13-8 (threes by Mike Devine and Luke Angelica), the Falcons feel prey to a 9-0 Agawam run. But they regrouped in back of their switching defenses. It included a press which forced the ball out of Max Blanton’s hands.

The press created three turnovers and got the game back to Minnechaug’s tempo.

Blanton and Zachary Moccio each scored 17 to pace Agawam’s scoring. Minnechaug’s senior leadership creates this resilience.

“(The seniors) Mike Talaia, Max Torrence, Griffin McQuaide and Luke are out leaders,” said the Minnechaug coach. “We have six sophomores. In the highs and lows of any basketball season, you need experienced kids.”

Earlier, Minnechaug lost four straight games, its starting point guard (Max Torres) out during part of this stretch. It included a sound 89-54 loss at the hands of Central. At the end of it,

“West Side shocked us (69-57 defeat). We were in a tailspin,” admitted Orzech.



Zach Moccio reaches out for the layup. PHOTOS BY DAVID HENRY WWW.SWEETDOGPHOTOS.COM



Mike Berthaiume shoots on the hoop.

“But we found our way out of it. The win over Chicopee Comp helped reverse our course.”

At Comp, Ofcarcik scored 21, Angelica 17 and Devine 15 as the Falcons held off a stirring fourth quarter 18-6 fourth quarter comeback by Comp on its home floor.

A 6’2” guard, Devine has been a key performer. He is listed as a backcourt player, but in this evolutionary time of positionless basketball, he plays everywhere.

“Matt’s having a tremendous season,” said the coach. “He can score, handle it, and he’s our best defender.”

The two have been among the group which has been one of many teams to make this into a yearlong effort. The Falcons competed in the Jack

Troy this summer. They then played in a fall league in Hartford leading up to the season.

The commitment is there, it’s pretty obvious,” said Orzech.

The Falcons have qualified for the tournament and the next two weeks present the opportunity to win the league.

“We control our destiny,” said the coach.

The showdown for first place is Thursday when Minnechaug plays at Sabis.

“It’ll be a tough game,” said Orzech. “We defeated them (59-54 at home) the first time we played. But Trey Hodge is one of the best players in Western Mass. He’s very quick and we’ve always had a difficult time defending him.”

Obituary

James D. Shaer, 61

James D. “Jim” Shaer of Melrose was known to many as a person who helped others and worked for the greater good in his community, state, region and nation while being a devoted family man. He consistently reached such heights in daily life and his 40-year career in public policy and service, government relations and media. Shaer died Saturday, Feb. 1. He was 61.



Shaer is survived by his wife of 26 years, Nancy (Tine) Shaer, recently retired from State Street Bank. Together, they traveled to Alaska, Ocracoke Island in the Outer Banks of North Carolina, the Caribbean and on baseball excursions. Jim and Nancy presided over dozens of gatherings in their warm, welcoming homes.

One of six children born to Domit J. and Eva N. Shaer of Feeding Hills, Jim is survived by siblings Annmarie of Springfield, Dr. Catherine M. (Dr. Victor Sank) of Rockville, Md., Joseph D. (Rainbow) of Agawam and Feeding Hills, his twin Thomas G. (Lisa Shelnitz) of Chicago, Ill., and John N. (Lynne) of Rockville, Md. He is also survived by nieces, nephews, cousins and countless friends.

Everyone knew they could call on “Uncle Jimmy” or “Friend Jim” for anything, any time. He modeled a dedication to family, ethics, equal rights and public service. At weddings and other events, Shaer’s speeches traced family roots and achievements as he tied them together with the seemingly unrelated paths of others. He never missed a graduation, dance recital

or other event of importance to relatives or friends.

Born Aug. 27, 1958, in Springfield, Shaer graduated from Agawam High School and later earned a B.A. in political science from American International College. He became active in Massachusetts politics as a teenager and went on to participate in many conventions of the Democratic National Committee (twice as a delegate) and Massachusetts Democratic Party.

At a state convention, Jim served on a team working for the nomination of John Kerry for lieutenant governor, won after multiple ballots. It was the biggest early step in Kerry’s political career and, after Kerry was elected a United States Senator, Shaer served 15 years on his staff, first as assistant to the senator then assistant state director.

Helping individual constituents and independent businesses became Shaer’s specialty. His files contain a huge volume of letters thanking him for solving problems and assisting companies, which saved jobs. Shaer was also the lead member of Kerry’s staff in developing major provisions of the 1994 Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act.

Jim Shaer’s belief in John Kerry was unshinting, and the senator on numerous occasions personally expressed profound appreciation to him for securing the 1996 endorsement of Kerry by the Boston Police Patrolmen’s Association, which usually endorsed Republicans. Kerry would later say it made “an enormous difference.” That key factor changed a narrative six weeks before Election Day, and Kerry beat challenger William Weld.

The next phase of Shaer’s career was as a government relations director for

universities and a communications company. His most recent position was executive consultant for advocacy and public policy for the Urban League of Eastern Massachusetts. National, state and local officials, along with community leaders, recognized Shaer’s contributions and expressed gratitude for his skill and commitment.

Shaer was an altar boy and lector at St. Anthony Church in Springfield and played football for Agawam High. After graduation from AIC, he did local freelance advertising work. Shaer grew up learning about people while working at Shaer’s Market in Feeding Hills, owned by his parents for three decades.

“I first heard Spanish and Polish from immigrants shopping at our store,” Shaer recalled. “They were hardworking, honest farm people, and they trusted us to count their change correctly.”

Though passionate about public affairs, Shaer, with his wife, still found time to avidly follow the Boston sports teams. He attended six Red Sox World Series, a Celtics title-clinching game, a Patriots Super Bowl, several All-Star Games and the Chicago Cubs 2016 World Series.

This was a man who humbly yet strongly impacted others. Shaer had a great sense of humor and enjoyed the simple things in life. He will be dearly missed.

Family, friends and colleagues gathered for Shaer’s wake Thursday, Feb. 6, in Melrose. Former U.S. Secretary of State and U.S. Senator John Kerry attended. Funeral services were held Friday, Feb. 7.

Memorial contributions may be made to St. Jude’s Children’s Research Hospital (www.stjude.org) or Smile Train (smiletrain.org).

DEATH NOTICE

Shaer, James D.

Died Feb. 1
Funeral Feb. 7

Agawam Advertiser News

OBITUARY POLICY

Turley Publications offers two types of obituaries.

One is a free, brief **Death Notice** listing the name of deceased, date of death and funeral date and place.

The other is a **Paid Obituary**, costing \$100, which allows families to publish extended death notice information of their own choice and may include a photograph. **Death Notices & Paid Obituaries** should be submitted through a funeral home to: obits@turley.com.

Exceptions will be made only when the family provides a death certificate and must be pre-paid.

NOTICE

ERRORS: Each advertiser is requested to check their advertisement the first time it appears. This paper will not be responsible for more than one corrected insertion, nor will be liable for any error in an advertisement to a greater extent than the cost of the space occupied by the item in the advertisement.

Public Notices

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given by **Langonet Towing** pursuant to the provisions of G.L. c.255, Section 39A, that on **February 21, 2020 at 63 Ramah Cir S, Agawam** the following Motor Vehicles will be sold at private sale to satisfy the garagekeeper’s lien thereon for storage, towing charges, and expenses of notices and sale of said vehicle.

1952 Chevy C10
VIN:
Justin Ayotte
451 Lake Road
West Suffield, CT 06093

2/06, 2/13/2020

AGAWAM ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS LEGAL ADVERTISEMENT NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the Agawam Zoning Board of Appeals will hold a public hearing at the Agawam Senior Center, Dining Room, 954 Main Street, Agawam, MA on **Monday, February 24, 2020 at 6:30PM** for all parties interested in the request of Robert Stephens, who is seeking a variance from the Town of Agawam’s Zoning Ordinances, Chapter 180, Section 39(B) to construct a porch with less than the required front setback at the premises identified as 5 Kimberly Circle.

Doreen A. Prouty
Chairperson
2/06, 2/13/2020

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given by **Langonet Towing** pursuant to the provisions of G.L. c.255, Section 39A, that on **February 14, 2020 at 63 Ramah Cir S, Agawam** the following Motor Vehicles will be sold at private sale to satisfy the garagekeeper’s lien thereon for storage, towing charges, and expenses of notices and sale of said vehicle.

2003 Nissan Xterra
VIN: 5N1ED28Y53C644589
Daniel Mirolli
44 River Street
Agawam, MA 01001

2002 Infiniti I35
VIN: JNKDA31A22T018040
Robert Seegrave Jr.
19 Hamilton Circle
Feeding Hills, MA 01030

2005 Ford Taurus
VIN: 1FAHP53235A221866
Heidi Madeley
61 Center Street
Thomaston, CT 06787

1/30, 2/06, 2/13/2020

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given by USA Towing, 71 Garden St., Feeding Hills, MA 01030, sale of a motor vehicle pursuant to the provisions of M.G.L. C.255, Section 38A, that on the following date, February 28, 2020 at 8:00 a.m., at USA Towing, said motor vehicle will be sold at a private sale to satisfy the garage keeper’s lien for towing, storage and costs of sale.

2008 VW Jetta
VIN: 3VWRZ71K18M082154
No plates with vehicle.
Name and address last known registered owner:

Gianfranco Scirococco
28 Grant St.
Agawam, MA 01001
2/06, 2/13, 2/20/2020

Commonwealth of Massachusetts The Trial Court Probate and Family Court Hampden Division 50 State Street Springfield, MA 01103 (413)748-8600

Docket No. HD20P0004EA
Estate of:
Robert R. DeForge
Date of Death:
October 10, 2019
INFORMAL PROBATE PUBLICATION NOTICE

To all persons interested in the above captioned estate, by Petition of Petitioner **Deborah A. Bloom** of West Springfield, MA, a Will has been admitted to informal probate.

Deborah A. Bloom of West Springfield, MA has been informally appointed as the Personal Representative of the estate to serve **without** surety on the bond.

The estate is being administered under informal procedure by the Personal Representative under the Massachusetts Uniform Probate Code without supervision by the Court. Inventory and accounts are not required to be filed with the Court, but interested parties are entitled to notice regarding the administration from the Personal Representative and can petition the Court in any matter relating to the estate, including distribution of assets and expenses of administration. Interested parties are entitled to petition the Court to institute formal proceedings

and to obtain orders terminating or restricting the powers of Personal Representatives appointed under informal procedure. A copy of the Petition and Will, if any, can be obtained from the Petitioner.
2/13/2020

Commonwealth of Massachusetts The Trial Court Hampden Probate and Family Court 50 State Street Springfield, MA 01103 (413)748-7758

Docket No. HD20P0206EA
Estate of:
Nancy Anne Edwards
Also known as:
Nancy A. Edwards
Date of Death: 06/06/2019
CITATION ON PETITION FOR FORMAL ADJUDICATION

To all interested persons:
A Petition for **Formal Probate of Will with Appointment of Personal Representative** has been filed by **Paul E. Provost** of Tupper

Lake NY requesting that the Court enter a formal Decree and Order and for such other relief as requested in the Petition.

The Petitioner requests that: **Paul E. Provost** of Tupper Lake NY be appointed as Personal Representative(s) of said estate to serve **Without Surety** on the bond in an **unsupervised** administration.

IMPORTANT NOTICE
You have the right to obtain a copy of the Petition from the Petitioner or at the Court. You have a right to object to this proceeding. To do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance and objection at this Court before: 10:00 a.m. on the return day of **03/03/2020**.

This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance and objection if you object to this proceeding. If you fail to file a timely written appearance and objection followed by an affidavit of objections within thirty (30) days of

the return day, action may be taken without further notice to you.

UNSUPERVISED ADMINISTRATION UNDER THE MASSACHUSETTS UNIFORM PROBATE CODE (MUPC)

A Personal Representative appointed under the MUPC in an unsupervised administration is not required to file an inventory or annual accounts with the Court. Persons interested in the estate are entitled to notice regarding the administration directly from the Personal Representative and may petition the Court in any matter relating to the estate, including the distribution of assets and expenses of administration.

WITNESS, Hon. Barbara M Hyland, First Justice of this Court.

Date: February 03, 2020
Suzanne T. Seguin
Register of Probate

2/13/2020

How to submit legal notices

All legal notices to be published in the Agawam Advertiser News should be sent directly to notices@turley.com. Please indicate the newspapers and publication date(s) for the notice(s) in the subject line of your email. For questions regarding coverage area, procedures or cost, please call Jamie Joslyn directly at 413-283-8393, ext. 216.

Turley Publications Inc. publishes 15 weekly newspapers throughout Western Massachusetts. Visit www.turley.com for more information.

Please check the accuracy of your legal notice prior to submission (i.e., date, time, spelling). Also, be sure the requested publication date coincides with the purpose of the notice, or as the law demands. Thank you.

Out & About

OUT & ABOUT

Out & About is a community calendar for Agawam and neighboring towns. Free listings are available for non-commercial, non-political entertainment or educational events that are free to attend, or fundraisers that benefit a non-profit organization. Only events in Agawam or one of its immediate bordering towns, or events that benefit an organization based in Agawam, will be listed. Submitted items should be brief, with only time, date, location, activity explanation, and contact information, and may be edited for length and style. Items may be sent to aan@turley.com, faxed to 413-283-7107 or mailed to Agawam Advertiser News, c/o Turley Publications, 24 Water St., Palmer, MA 01069. The deadline for calendar listings is noon Friday, the week before that Thursday's newspaper.

Thursday, Feb. 13

CHICKEN PARM DINNER at the American Legion, 478 Springfield St., Feeding Hills, 6-8 p.m. Catered by Pajer's. Tickets are \$15 per person and available at the door. Proceeds benefit the post.

Saturday, Feb. 15

SOUP AND SANDWICH LUNCHEON at the Grange hall, 47 N. West St., Feeding Hills, 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Homemade soups, sandwiches, dessert and choice of beverage will be sold for \$7 for adults, \$3.50 for children under 12. Proceeds benefit Community Grange 382. Reservations are suggested at 413-789-2061.

STORYTELLING ON THE GREEN at First Church of Christ, 763 Longmeadow St., Longmeadow, 7 p.m. Onawumi Jean Moss, "the soulful storyteller," will give a free performance in the church's Buxton Room. All are welcome. Refreshments will be served.

Saturday, Feb. 22

WINTERFEST in downtown West Springfield, 9 a.m. to noon. Activities at various locations along Elm and Park streets include clown performances, temporary tattoos, library crafts and a musical performance by Alexis Anamisis. All events are free.

Sunday, Feb. 23

SNAPSHOTS OF CIVIL RIGHTS CONCERT at First Church of Christ, 763 Longmeadow St., Longmeadow, 4 p.m. All are invited to a free concert of music by composer Anita Anderson Cooper with lyrics from the writings and speeches of Fannie Lou Hamer, Robert Kennedy, Charles McLaurin, Langston Hughes and more. Performers include Rob Adams, Marco Bonilla, Michaela Bowen, Dan Inglis, Karen McCarthy, Margaret Pash, Ben Peterson, John Thomas, the New Amherst Choir and the First Church of Chris Choir. More info: andercoop160@gmail.com.

Wednesday, Feb. 26

BLACK HISTORY OPEN MIC NIGHT in Room 18 of the Ely Campus Center at Westfield State University, 577 Western Ave., Westfield, 8 p.m. All are welcome to perform works representing black

Agawam Senior Center

The Senior Center at 954 Main St., Agawam, is open weekdays, 8 a.m. to 9 p.m. For more information, call 413-821-0605. Lunch is served daily at 11:30 a.m. for a \$3 suggested donation; diners must register 24 hours in advance at 413-821-0604.

Lunch Menu

Monday, Feb. 17: Presidents Day — Senior Center closed.
Tuesday, Feb. 18: Chicken Parmesan, pasta in homemade sauce, Caesar salad, fresh apples.
Wednesday, Feb. 19: Meatloaf with gravy, mashed potatoes, carrots and peas, baked good.
Thursday, Feb. 20: Loaded vegetable pizza, three bean salad, sliced peaches.
Friday, Feb. 21: Country pie (hamburg, rice, tomatoes and cheese), broccoli salad, pudding.

Daily Events

Monday, Feb. 17: Presidents Day — Senior Center closed.
Tuesday, Feb. 18: Weight training, 8:30 a.m.;

knitting, 9 a.m.; Zumba Gold (\$6), 10:15 a.m.; ladies billiards, noon; Senior Cinemas ("Night at the Museum"), 12:30 p.m.; mah jongg, 12:30 p.m.; dominoes, 12:30 p.m.; canasta, 1 p.m.; writing group, 1:30 p.m.; beginner line dancing, 6 p.m.; Junior Women's Club, 6 p.m.
Wednesday, Feb. 19: Yoga (\$6), 8:15 a.m.; gentle yoga (\$6), 9:45 a.m.; bereavement group, 10 a.m.; osteoporosis seminar, 10 a.m.; Meet the Mayor, 10:30 a.m.; bridge, 12:30 p.m.; ballroom lesson (see staff), 1 p.m.; Golden Agers Chapter 2 meeting, 1:30 p.m.; Zumba Gold (\$6), 5:30 p.m.; Tobacco Valley Artists, 6 p.m.; line dancing, 6:30 p.m.
Thursday, Feb. 20: Foot care by appointment; weight training, 8:30 a.m.; Quilting Club, 9 a.m.; Chats about Hearing, 10 a.m.; Wii Sports, 10:15 a.m.; reiki (\$10), 10:30 a.m.; bridge, 12:15 p.m.; dominoes, 12:30 p.m.; open art, 1 p.m.; yoga (\$6), 4 p.m.; line dancing, 5:30 p.m.
Friday, Feb. 21: Yin Yoga (\$6), 8:15 a.m.; Let's Paint (\$10), 9:15 a.m.; tai chi (\$6), 10 a.m.; canasta, 1 p.m.; cornhole, 1 p.m.; cribbage, 1 p.m.; card games, 1 p.m.; line dancing, 6 p.m.

artists, poets, musicians, etc., as part of Black His/Herstory Month at WSU.

Thursday, Feb. 27

JAMES BALDWIN FILM in Room 18 of the Ely Campus Center at Westfield State University, 577 Western Ave., Westfield, 4 p.m. "I Am Not Your Negro" will be screened, with a guided discussion with English professor Carol Bailey, as part of Black His/Herstory Month at WSU.

Friday, Feb. 28

LEAP YEAR TAG SALE at Agawam Congregational Church, 745 Main St., Agawam, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Something for everyone. Continues Saturday.

Saturday, Feb. 29

LEAP YEAR TAG SALE at Agawam Congregational Church, 745 Main St., Agawam, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Continued from Friday.

Friday, March 6

WOMEN OF '76 free performance at the Agawam Senior Center, 954 Main St., Agawam, 7 p.m. Rita Parisi will portray a Hessian general's wife, a minutewoman and spy catcher, and a Southern frontierswoman in this one-woman show about the American Revolution, part of the Agawam Cultural Council's Applause Series. Doors open at 6:15. More info: agawamcc.org.

ONGOING

NAMI CONNECTION, a free, peer-led support group for adults who are concerned about their mental health, meets Thursdays, 2-4 p.m., in the NAMI Western Massachusetts office at 324A Springfield St., Agawam. For more information, call 413-786-9139 or email information@namiwm.org.

OVEREATERS ANONYMOUS can help with eating problems. Meetings are held throughout Western Massachusetts, including regular meetings in Agawam. There are no dues, fees, weigh-ins or special foods to buy. All are welcome. For more information, call Springfield Answering Services at 413-783-4198 or Marcia at 703-415-6744, or visit www.oawmass.org.

THE TRADING POST consignment shop is open 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Wednesdays and 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturdays at First Baptist Church, 760 Main St., Agawam. The Trading Post carries a variety of items, including clothes, shoes, handbags, jewelry, books, toys, household and gift items. Donations are welcomed during store hours.

THE AGAWAM ST. PATRICK COMMITTEE meets the second Wednesday of each month, September through June, at 6:30 p.m. in the Peirce Conference Room at the Agawam Public Library, 750 Cooper St. For information on how to join, call Vera Conway at 413-786-3247 or email RosemarySandlin@rosemarysandlin@gmail.com.

AGAWAM UNITED METHODIST CHURCH, 459 Mill St., Agawam, offers a free "Crochet Club" the first and third Tuesday of each month from 6:30 to 8 p.m. All are invited to join, including men and women and beginners to experienced crocheters. Drop-ins welcome. Hooks and yarn available if needed. For more information, call 413-786-7991.

ADULT DROP-IN SIT & KNIT meets at the Agawam Public Library at 750 Cooper St. Tuesdays from 1-3 p.m. Bring your sticks and join other knitters for creative time. No registration is required.

GRANDPARENT'S PLAYGROUP Wednesdays, 9:30 a.m. to 11 a.m., at St. David's Church, 699 Springfield St., Feeding Hills. This free infant and toddler playgroup features music and movement, fostering children's interactions and sharing skills. Open to all grandparents and their grandchildren. Follows school schedule.

THE WESTFIELD WOMAN'S CLUB's clubhouse is available for rentals for wedding receptions, bridal showers, baby showers, graduation celebrations, and birthday and anniversary parties by the hour or the day. For more information, call Lilian at 413-568-2916.

A BREAST CANCER AND MASTECTOMY SUPPORT GROUP meets the fourth Tuesday of each month from 6 to 7:15 p.m. at 2 South Bridge Drive, Suite 1B, Agawam. Registration is required by calling 413-789-0200 or online at www.survivorjourneys.org.

RSVP OF THE PIONEER VALLEY is in need of volunteers to drive seniors to get groceries, visit their doctor and fill prescriptions. If you have two hours weekly, a dependable vehicle and really want to make a difference, contact Pat Sicard, RSVP Volunteer Manager, at 413-387-4558, ext. 1, or psicard@hcg-ma.org.

A CAREGIVER SUPPORT GROUP, facilitated by The Atrium at Cardinal Drive through the Alzheimer's Association, meets the first Thursday of the month at 5 p.m. at the Agawam Senior Center, 954 Main St., Agawam. All are welcome. To register, call 413-821-9911.

AN ALL CANCER SUPPORT GROUP meets the first Tuesday of each month from 6 to 7 p.m. at Sacred Heart Parish Center, 1061 Springfield St., Feeding Hills. Registration is required by calling 413-789-0200 or online at www.survivorjourneys.org.

A BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT GROUP meets the second Wednesday of each month at Heritage Woods Assisted Facility, 462 Main St., Agawam. Registration is required by calling 413-789-0200 or online at www.survivorjourneys.org.

WIDOWED SUPPORT GROUP for anyone who has lost a spouse. Captain Charles Leonard House, 663 Main St., Agawam, the second Wednesday of the month, 1:30 to 3:30 p.m.

FRIENDS AND FAMILY SUPPORT GROUP for anyone who has lost a child, parent, sibling, or dear relative or friend. Captain Charles Leonard House, 663 Main St., Agawam, the second Wednesday of the month, 7 to 9 p.m.

YOUR CAR, TRUCK OR CAMPER may be worth more as a donation than a trade-in. Call the Massachusetts Association for the Blind at 888-613-2777 for more information. Towing is free. All donations are tax deductible.

CITY COUNCIL AGENDA

7 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 18
Agawam Junior High School
1305 Springfield St., Feeding Hills

- A. Roll call
B. Moment of Silence and Pledge of Allegiance
C. Citizen's Speak Time
D. Minutes
1. Regular Council Meeting — Feb. 3, 2020
E. Declaration of council president
1. State of the City Address — Mayor Sapelli
F. Presentation of resolutions
1. TR-2019-78 — A Resolution accepting a grant (\$3,064.25) from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 44, Section 53A, in relation to the Massachusetts Electric Vehicle Incentive Program (Mayor Sapelli) (Tabled 2/3/20)
2. TR-2019-82 — A Resolution authorizing the Mayor to enter into consent for shared

- occupancy of Right of Way Easement Agreements between the Town of Agawam and Tennessee Gas Pipeline Company, LLC regarding the upgrade to the pipeline (Mayor Sapelli) (Tabled 2/3/20)
3. TR-2020-14 — A Resolution accepting a grant (\$9,244.08) from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts State 911 Department for the Agawam Police Department (Mayor Sapelli)
4. TR-2020-15 — A Resolution confirmed the appointment of Aldo Mancini, 482 South West Street, Feeding Hills, MA as the Agawam Veterans' Graves Officer to a term expiring January 31, 2023 (Mayor Sapelli)
5. TR-2020-16 — A Resolution authorizing the Agawam School Department to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding for Reimbursement of Foster Care Transportation Costs (Mayor Sapelli)
6. TR-2020-17 — A Resolution appropriating from the Community Preservation Fund and authorizing the expenditure of Community Preservation Funds to assist in the

- creation of Community Housing at 586 Mill Street, Lot 4, as proposed by Wayfinders, Inc. (CPA) (Referred to Community Relations Committee)
7. TR-2020-18 — A Resolution appropriating from the Community Preservation Fund and authorizing the expenditure of Community Preservation Funds for the construction of the Learning Tree Conservation Park at the Agawam High School (CPA) (Referred to Community Relations Committee)
G. Report of council committees
H. Elections
I. Public hearings
J. Old business
1. TO-2020-5 — An Order Amending a Class 2 Dealer's LICENSE to KLC Auto Sales, Inc., 1514 Main Street, Agawam, MA (Clerk) (Referred to Administrative Committee)
K. New business: Unavailable at press time.
L. Any other matter that may legally come before the City Council
M. Adjournment

ARREST LOG

The Agawam Police Department responded to 316 calls for service Feb. 3-9, and recorded the following arrests. No arrests in the public log have been omitted. All suspects are innocent until proven guilty.

Tuesday, Feb. 4

Mark D. Colombi, 59, of 25 Woodside Circle, Southwick, was arrested at 10:08 p.m. on North

Westfield Street and charged with driving with a suspended license.

Wednesday, Feb. 5

Adolfo Lopez-Chaca, 27, of 19 Royal St., Agawam, was arrested at 2:38 a.m. on Suffield Street and charged with driving without a license, a marked lanes violation, and intimidating a witness, juror, police or court official.

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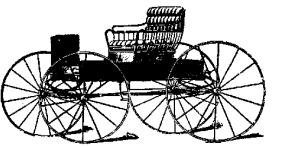
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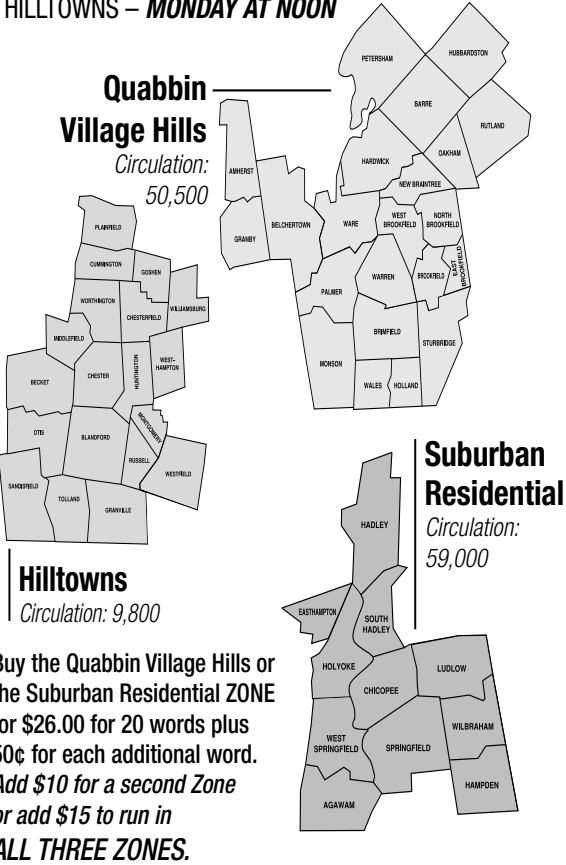
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Our Town

ABLE Machine Tool Sales hires new vice presidents, managers

ABLE Machine Tool Sales, an award-winning Northeast region distributor for top brand machine tools, recently announced several new hires. Christopher Lockery has been named general manager, while Mark Perreault and Georgia Sappleton were hired as vice presidents, and Ralph Lazzara as sales manager.

Christopher Lockery was named ABLE's new general manager. He has been with ABLE Machine Tool Sales for 13 years, working his way up from the parts department. In his new role, he also handles ABLE's information technology systems, software and related training; and is involved with service, parts, accounting, and meeting his strategic objectives, including reacting quickly to customer and employee needs.



Ralph Lazzara



Christopher Lockery



Mark Perreault



Georgia Sappleton

"Basically, I solve logistical and other problems," said Lockery. "I make sure employees and customers have what they need to do their jobs. Customers want the items they ordered delivered on time, whether they ordered a million-dollar machine or a \$20 part. Our communication, internal process and delivery systems have to run smoothly."

"Christopher is the second generation of the

Lockery family to take a decision-making role at ABLE Machine Tool Sales," said Alan Lockery, company president, majority owner, and one of the original founders. "He has been with the company for a long time, learning from the ground up, interfacing with about everyone, and helping to organize certain processes. I'm very proud to work with him and have him move up to general manager."

Georgia Sappleton was hired to the newly created senior management position of vice president of human resources. A seasoned administrator with over 20 years of education and experience, her responsibilities include recruiting skilled individuals, matching them to the right jobs and developing programs to retain valuable older employees nearing retirement age.

"Success comes from leading employees more than managing them," said Sappleton. "When you communicate with employees, try to understand what's important to them, offer them training so they feel comfortable with what is expected of them, and support their career goals, they feel inspired, valued, and empowered to make decisions. Prepared employees naturally do a good job, motivate their coworkers and subordinates, and stay on the job longer. Employees are our backbone and our future."

Sappleton will recruit new talent from high schools, colleges, job fairs, industry resources, and job boards as needed.

"We have read the statistics that up to 61 percent of workers in our industry will be eligible to retire within the next 10 years," said Alan

Lockery. "That is a lot of brain power to lose, or win. We plan to be proactive."

Sappleton holds a master's degree in business administration from Albertus Magnus College and has a bachelor's degree in business administration from Bay Path College. She belongs to the Employers Association of the NorthEast and lives in Bloomfield, Conn., with her family.

Mark Perreault is taking a senior management position of vice president of sales.

"Mark has extensive technical knowledge, good people skills, fully understands of our customers' manufacturing operations, and has integrity. He sees the big picture," said Alan Lockery. "Mark will represent ABLE Machine Tools Sales within and beyond the sales department by participating in trade shows, workshops, sales seminars and various events on behalf of ABLE, our OEMs and customers. We expect Mark to keep up with industry trends, collect qualified leads, and help his sales team and our company stay informed and successful."

"Selling requires good listening skills," said Perreault. "Machine tool purchases are often made by customer groups, including folks like general, operating, purchasing and quality control managers. I encourage my sales team to listen, then look for applications and solutions. I listen to input from members of my sales team and value their experience and contribution. Listening brings out the concerns and the best ideas. It inspires people to participate and feel satisfied with decisions. The

goal for my sales team is to support customer satisfaction and help ABLE continuously improve and grow. I have a lot of respect for the professionals I work with on all sides of the process."

Perreault has over 30 years of experience selling technical products and CNC machines. He is a graduate of Springfield Community Technical College, where he studied the implementation of design and manufacturing solutions and later became educated and experienced in Application Engineering. A native of Enfield, Conn., Perreault has lived in Granby, Conn., with his family for nearly 30 years. He has been involved in regional, national and international machine tool sales.

Ralph Lazzara joins the team as sales manager. Lazzara has over 24 years of machine tool sales and management experience covering large territories. He reports to Perreault.

"Customers today have lots of buying options for machine tools," said Lazzara. "ABLE Machine Tool Sales has a great product line, helps customers choose the right tools to fit their needs and goals, and has industry-wide respect. I joined ABLE to lead an already successful sales team, update the CRM, and help grow the company. I'm where I want to be, where I can make a difference."

He has a bachelor's degree from Charter Oak State College, where he majored in organizational leadership and graduated with honors.

"A good sales team helps design systems and workstations that support the customer's operations and assembly lines," said Lazzara. "With the right machine tools, our customers and their customers can count on well manufactured, consistent parts. We are all part of the same team. Our customers' success is our success."

Lazzara lives Enfield, Conn., with his family, and has been involved in regional, national and international machine tool sales.

ABLE Machine Tool Sales has distributed name-brand OEM machine tools to customers throughout the Northeast for more than 33 years. The company is headquartered at 253 Silver St., Agawam.

50 years together



Thomas and Janis Phaneuf, who met at Agawam High School and spent more than 60 years living in Agawam, recently celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary. Tom and Janis raised their three children in Agawam, Christine, Sharon and Stephen, and were active in several organizations, such as Agawam Youth Soccer. They now live in Gainesville, Fla., where they are the proud grandparents of three wonderful grandchildren who keep them active and busy in their retirement. SUBMITTED PHOTO

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